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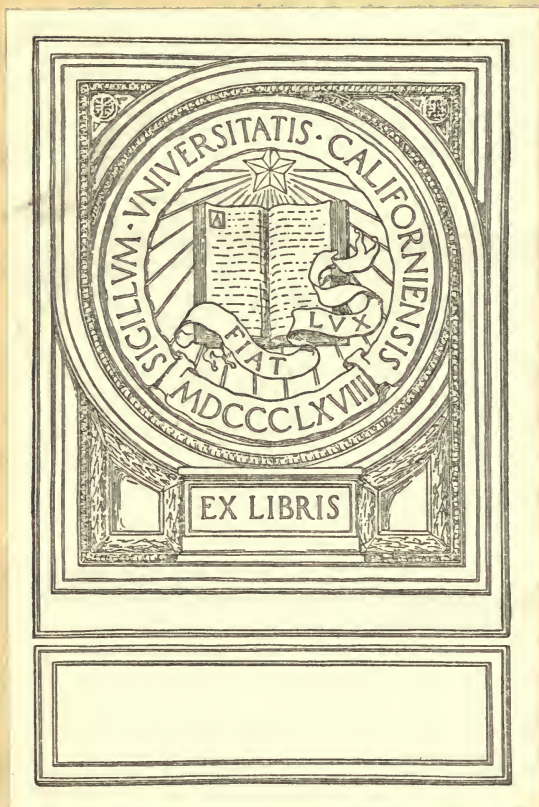
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Mrs Sarah James

from her Grand Children



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Frontenac.







From a Painting by A.W. Twitchell

Alfred B. Smeel.

FRONTENAC:

OR

The Atotacha of the Iroquois.

A METRICAL ROMANCE

BY ALFRED B. STREET.

From Bentley's London Edition.

NEW YORK:

BAKER AND SCRIBNER,

145 NASSAU STREET AND 36 PARK ROW.

1849.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1849, by
BAKER AND SCRIBNER,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern
District of New York.

Printed by
C. W. BENEDICT,
201 William street.

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P R E F A C E .

Our tale is based upon the following chapter of history :—
In the month of June, 1696, Count Frontenac, then Governor-General of Canada, assembled an army at Lachine, a few miles from Montreal, for an expedition against the Iroquois, who, from the earliest settlement of the province, had been inimical to the French.

The army consisted of the regular troops, the *habitans* or militia of the province, and some of the Indian tribes, who were the allies of the French, and who entertained an hereditary hatred against the Iroquois, by reason of their nations having, in former times, been conquered by the Confederacy. Frontenac, with this army, ascended the St. Lawrence, in batteaux and canoes, carrying with him, in addition to light arms, cannon, mortars, and grenades. Making the customary portages, he reached Lake Ontario,

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coasted its eastern waters, ascended the Oswego River, crossed Onondaga Lake, and encamped upon its borders. He then plunged, with his forces, into the vast wilderness, in search of the Iroquois. Arriving at the principal castle or village of the Onondagas, into whose particular canton or country he had penetrated, he found it deserted. Pushing farther then into the wilderness, Frontenac discovered nothing of his wild enemies, and finally, in disappointment, he retraced his march. On his return path, however, the Iroquois waylaid his steps, killed a number of his men, and did not cease their attacks until he had entirely left their territory.

The Iroquois at that time consisted of five nations, viz.: the Mohawks, Oneidas, Cayugas, Onondagas, and Senecas, occupying a territory which they figuratively called their "Long House," extending from east to west over what is now the State of New York, from the Lakes Erie and Ontario to the Hudson River.

These Indian nations had banded themselves into a League or Confederacy, at first for protection against their common enemies, continuing it afterwards for conquest. The time of the formation of this League is not known,

but is supposed to have been ages before the white man appeared amongst them, and it has given birth, on account of its value and importance, as well as its being involved in the mist of uncertainty, to a wild mythology concerning it amongst themselves.

When Champlain first came to Quebec, he found the Confederacy at war with the Hurons and Adirondacks, then warlike and powerful nations. Having allied himself to the Adirondacks, he joined them in an expedition against the Iroquois; and, by reason of the fire-arms he carried, then totally unknown to the warriors of the Confederacy, he was the means of defeating the latter on the borders of the very lake which now bears his name. This kindled an animosity against the French on the part of the Iroquois, which was never forgotten. Receiving, a few years afterwards, fire-arms in their turn from the Dutch, who, in the meanwhile, had penetrated the forests along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers in New York, the confederated warriors commenced their attacks upon the French at every post and settlement. So serious did their inroads become, that at times the very province itself was in jeopardy. And not only did these warlike savages annoy the French, but they turned their arms against all the neigh-

boring tribes, driving the Hurons and Adirondacks, their former rivals, from their villages and hunting-grounds, and absolutely exterminating many of the savage nations around them. Pushing their conquests in all directions, they at length mastered every Indian tribe residing, not only in New York, but every other, as far as Carolina to the south, and the Mississippi to the west. The Governors-General of Canada made frequent incursions into their territory or Long House, but those incursions only served to stimulate the wrath of these haughty and powerful savages, without weakening their strength or diminishing their power. That strength and power had arrived at their height when Frontenac took the reins of command for the second time, in 1689. The Iroquois had now assumed so threatening an attitude, that this stern and proud noble thought it advisable to penetrate their fastnesses and crush them, if possible, at a blow. Hence the expedition above detailed, which was, however, as fruitless as those of the former Governors-General De La Barre and De Nonville.

In the meanwhile the Confederacy (its good-will and friendship having been transferred by the Dutch to the English) proved itself as faithful to Corlear, the name it

gave to the English Governor, as hostile to Yon-non-de-yoh, its title for the Governor-General of the French. Consequently, in 1776, when the war of the Revolution broke out, true to their old friendship, the Iroquois sided with England. This led to the expedition of Sullivan, the American General, into the heart of their country. Sullivan desolated their fields, destroyed their villages, and exterminated the warriors they brought against him. From this period they began to decline. With the return of peace, civilization commenced hewing down their forests, and taking possession of their hunting-grounds; and the unwelcome sight of the Pale-face met them in every direction beside their beautiful streams and romantic lakes. Their Long House, to use their own pathetic language, was broken open at both ends, and the storms of destruction made it desolate for ever. The Mohawks abandoned their lovely valley in a body, and settled upon Grand River, in Canada, on territory granted them by the British Government. The rest of the Confederacy, although it had been previously increased by the accession of the Tuscaroras, a reclaimed original tribe, gradually diminished, and has still continued to waste away, until now only a few individuals remain, haunting their smiling valleys, and hovering around their sparkling waters, miserable spectres of the former greatness of the Iroquois.

A few more years, and even they will disappear. The memory of the Confederacy only will remain to furnish fit theme for song and story, and one more melancholy instance of a once powerful and happy people entirely disappearing from the face of the earth.

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CANTO FIRST.

LUCILLE,
FRONTENAC.



CANTO FIRST.

LUCILLE.

I.

'Twas in June's bright and glowing prime
The loveliest of the summer time.
The laurels were one splendid sheet
Of crowded blossom everywhere ;
The locust's clustered pearl was sweet,
And the tall whitewood made the air
Delicious with the fragrance shed
From the gold flowers all o'er it spread.

II.

In the rich pomp of dying day
Quebec, the rock-throned monarch, glowed—
Castle and spire and dwelling gray
The batteries rude that nighed their way
Along the cliff, beneath the play
Of the deep yellow light, were gay,
And the curved flood, below that lay,
In flashing glory flowed ;

Beyond, the sweet and mellow smile
Beamed upon Orleans' lovely isle ;
 Until the downward view
Was closed by mountain-tops that, reared
Against the burnished sky, appeared
 In misty dreamy hue.

III.

West of Quebec's embankments rose
The forests in their wild repose.
Between the trunks, the radiance slim
 Here came with slant and quivering blaze ;
Whilst there, in leaf-wreathed arbors dim,
 Was gathering gray the twilight's haze.
Where cut the boughs the back-ground glow
 That striped the west, a glittering belt,
The leaves transparent seemed, as though
 In the rich radiance they would melt.

IV.

Upon a narrow grassy glade,
Where thickets stood in grouping shade,
The light streaked down in golden mist,
Kindled the shrubs, the greensward kissed,
Until the clover-blossoms white
Flashed out like spangles large and bright.

v.

This green and sun-streaked glade was rife
With sights and sounds of forest life.

A robin in a bush was singing,
A flicker* rattled on a tree ;
In liquid fife-like tones round ringing
A thrasher† piped its melody ;
Crouching and leaping with pointed ear
From thicket to thicket a rabbit sped,
And on the short delicate grass a deer
Lashing the insects from off him, fed.

VI.

Sudden he paused with lifted foot,
Then, like an arrow, away he shot ;
Robin and flicker and thrasher were mute ;
The rabbit glided from the spot—
The next an Indian, from the shade,
Came bounding out upon the glade.

VII.

A warrior 'was he, armed for strife,
With tomahawk and scalping knife
Thrust through his wampum-belt ;
The long lock crowned his shaven head ;
Bare, save the belt, his form of red,
And where around his loins was spread
A stripe of shaggy felt.

* Flicker is the common name for the Golden-winged Woodpecker of the American forests.

† The Thrasher is the brown thrush of the American woods.

VIII.

With head aside he stood intent
An instant, then he stooped and bent
His ear upon the ground ;
Then looking forth with piercing eye,
Entered a laurel thicket nigh
So subtly, to the breeze's sigh
More motion 'twould have found.

IX.

Silence fell deeply down once more,
Till fluttering sounds among the trees
Told that the woodland fright was o'er
And soon would swell fresh harmonies.
The robin's warble was renewed,
The flicker's hammer tapped again,
And once more through the solitude
Rang out the thrasher's splendid strain ;
But the sweet sounds had scarcely filled
The place, when they again were stilled.
On the green glade two figures came ;
One of a tall and stalwart frame,
With sword and plume and martial air ;
The other scarce four summers old,
Whose coal-black eyes and raven hair
And features—though of loveliest mould,—
O'er-tinted with a light red shade,
Blood of the native race betrayed.

X.

The soldier, on the grass reclined,
Viewed the glad gambols of the child,
Who, to each impulse of her mind,
Now, gave her shout of pleasure wild,
As the rich red-bird in his flight
Passed with a flash some streak of light
Slanted in hazy sheen ;
And now, with footstep bounding free,
Chased the fleet squirrel to its tree,
Across the sylvan scene.

XI.

Tired with her sports, at length the girl
Paused at the leaning soldier's side,
Brushed from his brow a silvery curl,
And then her panting efforts plied,
Until she bared his glittering brand,
And sought to poise it in her hand.

XII.

Closer the child the senior drew
And with delight caressed her head ;
"Thou would'st have been a soldier too
Had'st thou been born a boy !" he said ;
"Thy sire's brave blood within thee glows
Too strong for peaceful dull repose ;

And the wild nature I espy
Of thy red mother in thine eye.
Listen! I'll tell the tale again
I told thee yester-night,
When proudly on the battle plain
France stemmed the dreadful fight,
And heard at last the clarion strain
Of victory crown her might!
And then commenced the legend old:
The girl's red features flushed more red,
Brightened her eye more wild and bold
As on the story sped,
Until with sight that fairly blazed,
The blade with both her hands she raised
And waved it o'er her head.

XIII.

At the first words, a thicket's screen
Had moved behind the pair,
And then two eyeballs fierce and keen
Like spots of fire gleamed there;
Out came a scalp-lock—then a head—
Then was put forth an arm of red,
And, like the cowering panther's tread,
The Indian left his lair.

XIV.

Stilly, as glides o'er earth a shade
From bush to bush along the glade

The stealthy savage went :
A snap, the girl half turned ; his crouch
Was like the spider's, when a touch
Its filmy snare has rent.
Then, rising from behind the bank
Where for an instant's space, he sank,
Again he glided low ;
The tremble of the leaves and grass
Telling alone his snake-like pass,
So viewless, silent, slow.

xv.

Near and more near, with eyes of flame,
The Indian creeping, creeping, came,
Until he paused and drew
His hatchet, then leaned quickly back
And from his clutch in whirling track
The glittering weapon flew ;
It fell upon the soldier's head,
Who, as gushed out a stream of red,
Groaned deep, and started from his bed
Convulsive to his knee ;
In vain, in vain ; the hatchet drank
Again his blood, and down he sank
Beneath his enemy.
And, as in pangs of parting life
The quivering soldier lay,
The savage drew his gleaming knife
And wrenched the scalp away.

XVI.

The child, transfixed in mute surprise,
Had viewed the scene with staring eyes ;
But, as the fearful Indian shred
The scalp from off that honored head,
Then, wakened from her trance,
Lifting the weapon, at the foe
She leaped, and sought to aim her blow
With stern defying glance.

XVII.

The savage gazed ; across his brow
A look gleamed proud and high ;
'Twas vivid admiration now
That glittered in his eye ;
And with a guttural of delight,
The child, again o'erwhelmed with fright,
But holding still the blade,
He swept upon his stalwart arm,
And, as she shrieked in wild alarm,
Plunged with her in the shade,
Leaving the scene to its repose
In the soft hue of twilight's close.

XVIII.

Over the glade the laden bee
Darted straight forward to its tree ;
Each bird low twittered on its perch ;
The night-hawk flew in jarring search ;

The crow flapped o'er with solemn croak ;
The frog its clamorous piping woke ;
The wolf drew out his plaintive howl ;
Shouted, in pauses brief, the owl ;
Her wail set up the whippoorwill ;
The tree-toad swelled its hollow trill ;
The fire-flies shed, in thickening flight,
Their gold-green intermittent light
Until the gray and glimmering haze
With fairy meteors seemed ablaze ;
And once another deer stepped out,
But as he stooped to feed, about
 He swerved with snort of dread,
And through the darkening forest waste
Dashed far away in frenzied haste—
 There lay the bloody dead.

FRONTENAC.

XIX.

Reared on the cliff, at the very brink,
Whence a pebble dropped would sink
 Four-score feet to the slope below,
 The Castle of St. Louis caught
Dancing hues of delicate pink,
 With which the clouds o'erhead were fraught
From the rich sunset's streaming glow.

XX.

Opposite, in the soft warm light
The Recollets' steeple glittered bright ;
And tipped with gold was the Convent by,
Whilst both threw a mantle of raven dye
 The broad Place d'Armes across,
That up to the massive curtain lay,
Save where a slanting and hazy ray,
Shooting between the buildings gray,
 Streaked it with yellow gloss ;
The bastions threw on the Castle court
Crescents of shade, whilst the sallyport
 Open, was filled with a golden glare
That made the sentinel's cuirass glow
With transient flashing, as to and fro
 Trode he monotonous there.

XXI.

Within a room of the Castle, bright
From a ray of rich ruby light,
That caused great tremulous blots to fall
On raftered ceiling and oaken wall,
And touched the weapons in nooks arranged,
Till keen quick winkings they exchanged,
Frontenac sat at a massive desk,
Carved all over with shapes grotesque.

XXII.

Around him were splendor and rudeness at strife,
Signs of the savage and civilized life.

Here branched, for some gay garment's use,
The broad flat antlers of the moose ;
There, o'er some painting rich were hung
Wampum in varied colors strung ;
Whilst moccasin and blanket red
By corslet and steel pike were spread.

XXIII.

A will, restraint that could not brook,
And pride that downward frowned on all,
Gleamed in his stern and haughty look
And breathed around his figure tall,
Although his bended eye and brow
Were fixed in anxious musing now.

XXIV.

The Iroquois in their dread and might
Stood frowning in his mental sight ;
Onward and onward their power had pressed ;
Upward and upward had risen their crest ;
Nought in the woods now their might could oppose,
Nought could withstand their confederate blows ;
Banded in strength and united in soul,
They moved on their course with the cataract's roll.

XXV.

Wherever the banner of France was reared,
The blood thirsty hate of the Braves appeared ;
Kindled against Champlain when first
His lightning death on their sires had burst,
Years had not quenched it, for never depart
Thoughts of revenge from the Indian heart.

XXVI.

Frontenac long, with care, had tried
To win their kindness to his side ;
But the stern Nations in disdain
The proffered belt cast back again.
If he uttered wrathful threat,
With a taunting scorn 'twas met :
And if he sent, in a burst of ire,
A sudden foray of sword and fire,
Everywhere up the wild warriors stood,
And rushed in fierce joy to their banquet of blood.

XXVII.

From ceiling and wall the light vanished away,
The room now began to grow dusky and gray ;
Sculptured desk and high-backed chair
Strange wild figures seemed to wear ;
Branching antlers round the wall
Seemed to wax more wide and tall ;
Weapons in their corners made
Faint dull glimmerings in the shade :—
Still sat Frontenac motionless,
Still thought's burthen seemed heavy to press.
Hark ! a sudden cry ! a beat
In the court of many feet—
He glanced through the casement—amid a throng
Of soldiers, a figure was borne along—
A drooping figure, the glimmering light
Yielding the outlines alone to sight.

XXVIII.

E'en as he looked the portal jarred,

A hurried tap at the door was heard,—

Hastily entered a pallid guard,

With a soldier's salute at the bidding word ;

“ That form—whose is it ?—this stir why made ? ”

“ The *Sieur Lavergne's* ! he is ”—

“ What ! speak ! ”—“ Dead ! ”—

“ Dead ! ”—

—“ Found by the hunter *Bizarre* in the glade

Where he used at sunset to ramble, with head
Showing the knife of the *Iroquois* wild ! ”—

“ Dead ! found in the glade ! but where's my child !

Lucille ! my daughter ! together they left

The castle at sunset ! ” The father bereft

Struggled with groans that the soldier suppressed ;

“ Send the scouts quickly and bid them not rest

Till the forests are scoured ! let Count *Lavergne*

Be brought in the room ! ” The spirit stern

Of the warrior seemed again to sway,

Whilst on the table they placed the dead,

Lighted the cresset swung overhead,

Then hastened with soft falling footsteps away.

Seizing the hand of his early friend,

Again did the soul of proud *Frontenac* bend ;

He pressed that mangled and clotted head,

There were the muscles all bare and red.

“ Those *Iroquois* fiends ! ”—he muttered low—

“ *Lucille*, *Lucille*, did the murderous blow

“ Fall too on thee ! ho ! without there ! haste !

Let the hunter Bizarre in our presence be placed !—
 Tell me," as low the rough woodsman made
 Obeisance uncouth, " didst thou traverse the glade ?
 Was there no other lying there ?"
 " None !"

" Leave me !" No eye must behold his despair.
 The ruthless stern Frontenac bent o'er the dead
 With a heart from which all but deep sorrow was fled ;
 That arm, cold and stiff, had once sheltered his life
 In a whirlwind of bloody and desperate strife ;
 And Lucille, the loved child of Sa-ha-wee !* too gone !
 Must his winter of life be left cheerless and lone !
 The Iroquois ! up flashed his fury ! he sprung,
 Clutched his sword until in its steel scabbard it rung ;
 And on through the room with quick gestures he strode,
 As though some fierce demon was plying his goad.

XXIX.

Scarce a fleeting three months glide
 Since his murdered Sa-ha-wee died,
 Struck by the hand of Ta-yo-nee† whilst seeing,
 (So her Iroquois handmaid said),
 Seated upon Cape Diamond's head,
 Slowly the beautiful sunset fleeing
 From the landscape below her spread.
 " Yon-non-de-yoh's slave no more,"
 Hissed the fierce Brave as his hatchet flashed o'er—
 " Die !" and gasping Sa-ha-wee fell ;
 Then pealing a bloody triumphant yell,

* "Sa-ha-wee" means "A Vine" in the On-on-dah-gah tongue.

† "Ta-yo-nee" means "A Wolf" in the same tongue.

And spurning the shrieking attendant away,
Off bore the chieftain the lifeless clay.
Ta-yo-nee ! her brother ! and could it be
That he again was the enemy !
The On-on-dah-gah fierce, whose hate
To the French race had visited
The vengeance of such dreadful fate
Upon a sister's head !
And then the thoughts of that sister stole
Like music o'er Frontenac's tortured soul.
A captive brought to the shores of France
By noble De Tracy with her sire,
In his stern bosom her fawn-like glance,
Kindled at length delicious fire ;
And when, heart-broken, her father died,
He wooed the red maiden to his side ;
In his gray castle beside the Rhone
Five bright summers above them shone ;
Decked with his Sovereign's trust, he bore
His destinies then to Canada's shore
With Sa-ha-wee and little Lucille ; and the moon
That saw them drop anchor, her beautiful boon
O'er the brow of the night had ceased scarcely to spread
E'er the blood of the first was thus ruthlessly shed.

xxx.

And now too the fate of Lavergne ! Lucille
Torn from him ! his over-wrought senses reel.
But hark ! on his ear a pealing swell ;
The neighboring Recollets' vesper-bell !
And soon, through the open casement, song

Comes like the blessing of peace along ;
Pouring on his heart like balm,
Spreading a delicious calm,
Hushing every thought of pain,
“ Mary Mother ! ” swelled the strain.

“ Mary Mother ! from thy dwelling
Look with soft and smiling eye !
Us, thy humble suppliants telling
Thou dost watch us from the sky.
Ever be thy presence near us !
Ever o’er us be thy care !
Mother of Him who perished ! hear us !
Mary Mother, list our prayer.

“ Honored above all, yet lowly
Bend the sweetness of thy brow,
Mary Mother ! Virgin holy !
On thy waiting children now,
Let thy smile, sweet Mother ! cheer us !
To our souls thy blessing bear !
Mother of Him who perished ! hear us !
Mary Mother ! list our prayer.”

He glanced without—the splendid moon
Was climbing to her gorgeous noon ;
The massive church and convent bright
Reared their tall summits in her light ;
Whilst on the court the castle laid
The sharp cut blackness of its shade ;
The sentry still with measured stride

Passed and repassed the portal wide ;
All, all was beauty, light and peace,
He felt his feverish throbbing cease.

“ Mary Mother !” seemed to bear
Still upon the balmy air ;
Now to rise along the sky,
Now to tremble from on high ;
Falling, swelling, echoing round,
Till the moonlight changed to sound ;
Sound that told of heaven above ;
Sound that told of guardian love ;
Off from his bosom rolled the gloom,
The wrath, the anguish, the despair ;
And in that still and lonely room
The stern old soldier knelt in prayer.

END OF CANTO FIRST.

CANTO SECOND.

THE IROQUOIS.

THE CANADIAN SPRING.

THE PEACE-BELT.

ON-ON-DAH-GAH.

THE ATOTARHO.

JISKOKO.

THE MESSAGE.

QUEBEC.

THE CALUMET.

THE TALK.



CANTO SECOND.

THE IROQUOIS.

I.

TWENTY-FOUR years! a fleeting span
In the fleeting career of man,
Twenty-four years have passed along
In the flow of my humble song.

II.

Oh the Eagle is swift when he sweeps from his height,
With his wing to the wind, and his eye to the light,
Darting on, darting on through his empire of air,
With nought to oppose him—his pathway to share;
But the king of the sky would have drooped on his way
E'er his wing could have measured the Iroquois sway.
The League—the proud summit had clambered at length,
Sought so long by their firm banded wisdom and strength;
Their Long House extended now, spacious and high.
The branches its rafters, its canopy, sky,
From Co-ha-ta-te-yah's* full oceanward bed,
To where its great bosom Ontario spread.

* "The Hudson River" in the Iroquois tongue.

The fierce Adirondaeks had fled from their wrath,
The Hurons been swept from their merciless path ;
Around, the Ottawas, like leaves had been strown ;
And the lake of the Eries struck silent and lone.
The Lenape, lords once of valley and hill,
Made women, bent low at their conquerors' will ;
By the far Mississippi, the Illini shrank
When the trail of the TORTOISE was seen on the bank ;
On the hills of New England the Pequod turned pale,
When the howl of the WOLF swelled at night on the gale ;
And the Cherokee shook in his green smiling bowers,
When the foot of the BEAR stamped his carpet of flowers.

III.

Death, death to the tribes that now lingered behind
When the Iroquois young men came on like the wind.
The forests were filled with affright and despair
When the whoops of the Braves keenly rolled on the air ;
They looked—at their frown the whole region grew black ;
They rose—and their way was the hurricane's track.

IV.

Stern Frontenac saw, from the walls of Quebec,
This flood from the woods dashing on without check.
His forts were surrounded, his outposts were burned,
French blood he saw flowing wherever he turned,
Now here, and now there, as clouds flash in their strife,
Was the dart of the foeman, the flash of their knife ;
The hunter, whilst tracking the Hudson Bay snow
In search of the ermine, sank under their blow ;

The settler whilst plying his axe in the wood,
At the skirts of Quebec, dyed the earth with his blood ;
The batteauman, pushing his craft to its goal
Up the swift Cataraqui,* fell dead at his pole ;
The sentry, whilst guarding Fort Frontenac's wall
By Ontario's waters, felt death in the ball ;
The fur trader, skimming with blanket and bead
The Lake of the Hurons, was followed to bleed ;
Blood crimsoned the earth, and cries burthened the air,
Until Frontenac, lashed into maddening despair,
Raged round like the lion foes gird in a ring,
His mane bristling fierce, yet in doubt where to spring,
Here opening his roar and there glancing his eye,
With the circle still growing more threatening and nigh.

v.

The proudest of all in the hostile array
Was young Thurenserah,† the Dawn of the Day,
The League's Atotarho ! the boldest in fight !
The wisest in council ! in form the most bright !
The fleetest of foot, the most skilled in the chase !
The glory and boast of the Iroquois race !
Day after day to fierce Frontenac's ear
Was the name of the chieftain borne loudly by fear ;
With the rush of the blast trod the Brave on his path,
Slaughter and flame were the marks of his wrath ;
In the silence of midnight his war-whoop arose ;
In the brightness of noonday were stricken his blows ;

* The name of the River St. Lawrence in the Iroquois tongue.

† "Thurenserah" signifies in the On-on-dah-gah language "the Dawn of Day."

Woe to the French ! for a demon seemed sent
On its way of dark horrors wherever he went ;
Woe to the French ! for the hatchet he bore
Wearied not, spared not, streamed ever with gore ;
Woe to the French ! for their ramparts of stone
Saved them from utter destruction alone.

THE CANADIAN SPRING.

VI.

'Twas May ! the Spring with magic bloom
Leaped up from Winter's frozen tomb.
Day lit the river's icy mail ;
 The bland warm rain at evening sank ;
Ice fragments dashed in midnight's gale ;
 The moose at morn the ripples drank.
The yacht, that stood with naked mast
 In the locked shallows motionless
When sunset fell, went curtseying past
 As breathed the morning's light caress.
The woodman, in the forest deep,
 At sunrise heard with gladdening thrill,
Where yester-eve was gloomy sleep.
 The brown rossignol's carol shrill ;
Where yester-eve the snowbank spread
 The hemlock's twisted roots between,
He saw the coltsfoot's golden head
 Rising from mosses plump and green ;

Whilst all around were budding trees,
And mellow sweetness filled the breeze.
A few days passed along, and brought
More changes as by magic wrought.
With plumes were tipped the beechen sprays ;
The birch long dangling tassels showed ;
The oak still bare, but in a blaze
Of gorgeous red the maple glowed ;
With clusters of the purest white
Cherry and shadbush charmed the sight
Like spots of snow the boughs among ;
And showers of strawberry blossoms made
Rich carpets in each field and glade
Where day its kindest glances flung.
And air too hailed Spring's joyous sway ;
The bluebird warbled clear and sweet ;
Then came the wren with carols gay,
The custom'd roof and porch to greet ;
The mockbird showed its varied skill ;
At evening moaned the whippoorwill.
Type of the Spring from Winter's gloom !
The butterfly new being found ;
Whilst round the pink may-apple's bloom
Gave myriad drinking bees their sound.
Great fleeting clouds the pigeons made ;
When near her brood the hunter strayed
With trailing limp the partridge stirred ;
Whilst a quick feathered spangle shot
Rapid as thought from spot to spot
Showing the fairy hummingbird.

THE PEACE-BELT.

VII.

In the same room where Frontenac stern
Heard the loss of Lucille and the death of Lavergne.
 Twenty-four rapid years ago ;
In this same room were his footsteps bent
 To and fro, to and fro ;
Over his visage shades came and went ;
Now thought in his wrinkles crouched low like a snake,
Now venomous fury all up and awake,
 Now death-like pallor, now crimson glow.
Those years had dimmed his eye's quick flame,
Whitened his brow, and bent his frame,
For more than the threescore-and-ten had been given,
Whether in favor or anger, by Heaven,
Within these years had the staff of command
Been wielded by another's hand,
But once more at his sovereign's word
O'er Canada's destinies stood he lord.

VIII.

To and fro, to and fro,
Frontenac strode through light and shade
 Hastily, heavily, still and slow,
As thought or passion within him swayed.
Now, chafing fierce, and treading high,
 Like a roused lion in his den ;

Now, like the panther creeping nigh
The hunter slumbering in the glen.
He! governor of the province! he
The sport of Iroquois enmity!
He clenched his teeth, and his sword half drew,
Whilst darkened his brow to a swarthy hue:
“ Oh, that this young Thurenserah stood
Before me, e’en in his native wood,
This aged arm—but slumber pride,
’Twere best to win him to my side.”
He stamped his foot “ Without that wait !”
A guardsman in his presence bent ;
“ Ta-wen-deh* bid attend us straight !”
Then on again the stridings went.
The door re-opened ; with a tread
Noiseless as snowflakes in their fall
And bowing scarce his haughty head,
Near came an Indian grim and tall.
With one proud step the noble met
This Huron runner of Lorette,
Holding a wampum belt in sight,
Of braided colors black and white.
“ Ta-wen-deh ! take this belt of peace ;
Rest not till Thurenserah’s found ;
Tell him, we wish the storm to cease ;
The hatchet bury in the ground.
Tell him, the Atotarho proud,
Forgetting enmity and wrath,

* “ The Otter ” in the Huron tongue.

Should from our sky sweep every cloud,
Should clear all briers from off our path.
Tell him to seek this lodge of stone,
Where oft the council fire has shown ;
That Yon-non-de-yoh asks a talk
The tree of peace between to set,
Beneath to smoke the calumet,
And wipe from blood the tomahawk !”

ON-ON-DAH-GAH.

IX.

The sunset, from his rainbow throne,
On On-on-dah-gah Hollow shone.
A double ring of palisade
Enclosed within one half its bounds
A round-topped Indian village, made
Of mats and branches ; scores of mounds
Told that the other yielded space
To the thrice hallowed burial-place ;
Thence maize, ris’n newly, spread each way,
(Save where the usual ball-green lay,)
The earth-domes tipped with golden glow ;
The whole shaped like the Indian bow
By the curved forest, and a stream
That stretched below its sunset gleam.

X.

Along the castle’s beaten square,
Displaying marks of skill and care,

The dread, renowned Tear-jis-ta-yo
Extended its long log-built frame ;
Shrining with the Sacred Flame,
Which burned with never-ceasing glow.
Type of the ancient league that bound
The five Red Nations into one,
Ages had seen its light cast round
Successive forms of sire and son
In countless councils bearing part :
The Feast of Union every year
Renewing by the radiance clear
The tie in each confederate's heart.

XI.

Ever on high the smoke-cloud streamed.
In summer's sun it richly gleamed ;
Against stern winter's sky of gray
In wreaths condensed and pale it lay ;
In midnight's hushed and solemn gloom
It touched the heavens with sable plume ;
Like ocean's surges wild it cast
Its rolling fragments on the blast ;
And pointed upward deep and proud
Toward the black frowning thundercloud.

XII.

All eyes, but one, were barred the Flame,
Save when the Feast of Union came ;
And if the portal oped perchance,
Or, through some crevice, streaks of red

Broke out, away was turned the glance,
Quick from the precincts passed the tread.

XIII.

Unceasing sustenance it found
From the vast forests spread around.
The boy had seen it with awed sight;
It shone upon his locks of white;
Still glowed its undiminished light
When death its trophy won;
Another generation passed,
And still the ruddy gleams were cast,
Unwasted as the sun.

XIV.

A priestess watched with tireless care
That the pure splendor of the fire
Should never, day nor night, expire,
And always was her presence there.
The Atotarho's mother—she
Cherished with pride the dignity
To keep alive the blaze;
And, save for him, her heart had not
A thought or wish beyond the spot
So sacred to her gaze.

XV.

Once every year a glowing brand,
Whose sparkles from the Flame had birth,
Was borne by To-ne-sah-hah's hand

To every On-on-dah-gah hearth ;
And there again the wigwam-fire,
For this end suffered to expire,
At the brand's touch its radiance threw
The hearth thus sacred made anew.
Emblem how all is cold and black
When Hah-wen-ne-yo's smile is o'er,
And then how warm and bright, when back
Flashes his glorious glance once more.
Thence through the Long House went the tread
Of the gray priest, the brand made red
By the whirled wheel, and everywhere
Again he made the dark hearths bright
With the fire-emblem, whilst the air
Rang with the usual festal rite.

THE ATOTARHO.

XVI.

Upon the square's opposing side
The Atotarho's lodge arose !
Its domed shape also, greater pride
And skill displaying far than those
On either side the space that flanked,
And into ways broad trodden ranked,
Each warrior's totem rudely cut
Above the porch of every hut,
With narrow transverse lanes between,
Till the slant pickets closed the scene.

XVII.

The entrance of the lodge before
Hung a gigantic panther skin
(Spoil of the Atotarho's might
Won in a desperate mountain fight,)
Whilst beaver furs the earthen floor
With delicate softness robed within.
The walls with deerskins were o'erspread,
White as the snow the lake-marsh shed.
Impending from moose-antlers, shone
The League's great Calumet, its stem
Plumed like the feathery diadem
The Atotarho on his throne
Of branches in the square displayed,
When for the Union Feast arrayed.

XVIII.

His own rich pipe was hung below,
Its bowl and stem one general glow
With thickly pictured tints of red,
Telling of actions stern and dread.
On one side was the bearskin couch,
Above it his fusee and pouch ;
Around were ranged the war-club strong
And curved, with its wrist-looping thong ;
The bow with deeds all over dyed,
The flint-head arrows at its side ;
Leggings of crimson, mantle felts ;

Snowy and purple wampum-belts ;
Moccasins quilled in rainbow hue ;
Broad sinewed snow-shoes ; girdles blue ;
Sharp scalping-knives and hatchets keen ;
And Feast-crown rich in feathery sheen ;
Whilst from the floor a sapling sprung
With human scalps upon it strung ;
Age's gray locks, long woman's hair,
Childhood's and manhood's blended there.

XIX.

No wife the warrior's wigwam shared.
His venison or his maize prepared ;
No gentle accent welcomed him
When from the chase came weary limb ;
No soft hand bound his wounds when back
Returned from battle's bloody track ;
Sweet woman's eye—that household star,
Driving all household gloom afar—
Within his bleak walls never shone ;
The Atotarho lived alone.

XX.

And yet more bright each maiden's glance
When moved his figure in the dance ;
More eager bent each listening ear
When rose his war-song high and clear ;
Each maiden's tongue was loud to tell
His feats, so bold, so terrible,
The foemen slain, the castles won,
Within the frequent war-path done.

XXI.

When through the ways and lanes he went,
Dark sparkling eyes were on him bent ;
Soft hearts beat wheresoe'er he trod ;
Sweet cheeks blushed sweeter at his nod ;
For as the League's young men beyond
 In deeds, in beauty was he too ;
But yet affection's gentle bond
 The graceful warrior never knew.
He—the proud Atotarho—kept
 No thoughts within his heart for love ;
His spirit with the eagle swept,
 It cowered not to the cooing dove.

JISKOKO.

XXII.

Still for that nature stern and high,
 One loveliest of the maiden train,
In secret heaved the burning sigh,
 In secret felt the tender pain.
Her mother, captive in some strife,
In youth had been a white man's wife.
Then, hurried to a bloody grave
By a fierce On-on-dah-gah Brave,
Who said she had forgot her pride
To slumber by a Frenchman's side ;
And in another war-path brought
 The infant to her tribe, that she,

Though with the hated blood so fraught,
An On-on-dah-gah still should be.

XXIII.

Since, eighteen Springs their blossoms sweet
Had twined around Jiskoko's* feet.
Her large soft elk-like eye the race
Of the Ho-de-no-sonne showed,
Whilst on her sunny cheek the trace
Of her pale lineage—rose-like—glowed.
She followed ever with her eye
The Atotarho passing by ;
Whene'er his look was on her turned,
Her downcast brow with blushes burned ;
In the wild dance she marked his grace,
Her whole roused soul within her face ;
Whene'er he struck the battle-post,
She hung delighted on his boast ;
When on the war-path stern he went,
She'd frequent hide to weep the while ;
But when his scalp-whoop high he sent,
Returning, oh ! how bright her smile ;
And the glad maidens she would leave,
As if for very joy to grieve.
Then when she joined the praising throng,
Amidst the tinkling Indian lute,
Or the loud swell of joyous song,
To him, she, she alone was mute.

* " The Robin " in On-on-dah-gah.

Yet there, e'en there, so seeming cold,
The sigh and blush their story told.
But though the Atotarho blind
To her deep love appeared, his tone
And look were ever, ever kind,
Telling warm friendship held the throne.

XXIV.

Thus, while Jiskoko loved in vain,
She wildly was beloved again,
By Kah-kah* of fierce desperate mood,
Whose fiery will and vengeful blood
Caused her to shudder and turn pale,
Whene'er he told his hated tale.

XXV.

His sire Ska-nux-heh † was a Brave,
Noted, yet to vile passions slave.
Treachorous, blood-thirsty as a wolf,
Yet full of deep deceit and guile,
A calm look veiled the boiling gulf,
Murder was hidden in his smile.
But still, when on the war-path rushed
His feet, so just his after boast,
All blame was in his praises hushed,
The wretch was in the warrior lost.

* Kah-kah means "a Crow" in the On-on-dah-gah tongue.

† Ska-nux-heh means "a Fox" in On-on-dah-gah.

THE MESSAGE.

XXVI.

The sun his journey bright had bent
So low, a level ray he sent,
Tipping the forests with the glow,
Whilst twilight gathered gray below.

XXVII.

Upon the pleasant outside green
Two shouting bands, the gates between,
With their broad rackets, sent on high
The ball now soaring to the sky,
Now falling, to again be caught
And sent aloft with speed of thought,
Ever upon its whizzing wing
As though it were a living thing.

XXVIII.

Here, through the alleys, warriors bore
Short scarlet cloaks their shoulders o'er,
Arrow and bow in either hand,
Yet wearing nought of war's command ;
There, others strove in mimic fray,
Wrenching the fancied scalp away,
Casting their tomahawks about,
And quavering war-whoops pealing out.

XXIX.

Boys also in the mocking strife
Whirled the dull hatchet, aimed the knife ;
Whooped shrill, the scalp in gestures rent,
From the twanged bow the arrow sent,
Or, with strained strength, and flying feet,
Shot on, the distant goal to greet.
Whilst with their pipes the old men sat,
Each at his entrance on his mat.

XXX.

Upon the straggling trees that flung
Their boughs outside, upon the maize,
Infants in their lashed back-boards hung
Asleep, or with dull patient gaze ;
Whilst grouped their mothers gossiping,
The corn to golden powder pounding,
Drawing the water from the spring,
Or the kunatah's* flame surrounding.

XXXI.

Over the river's surface flew
Youths in the rapid birch canoe ;
Or floated for their finny prey ;
Or lurked, the feeding duck to slay.

* " A Kettle " in the On-on-dah-gah tongue.

XXXII.

Suddenly mid the maize, where led
A pathway to the neighb'ring shades,
A stranger's form was seen to tread,
Approaching toward the palisades,
And lifting, as he came, on high
Wampum of black and snowy dye.
A ringing whoop of warning swelled
From those the figure that beheld.
The ball plunged down, and lay in sleep;
The mock fights ceased, ceased whoop and leap;
The warriors checked their sauntering stride;
Sought the canoes the river side.

XXXIII.

The comer was an Indian tall,
And on him curiously gazed all;
Grave through the palisades he passed,
And paused within the square at last.

XXXIV.

There followed too the village crowd;
And, though the warriors silent gazed,
The women, boys, and children loud
Their voices in enquiry raised.
But mid the wild and chattering din,
The grim and frowning panther skin
Of Thurenserah's lodge was reared,
And at the threshold he appeared.

XXXV.

Of beauty high and rare was he ;
A deer-skin shirt of white was spread
Close round his frame from neck to knee,
Meeting his leggings richly red.
Delicate were his features, yet
A haughty soul was in them set ;
The customary paint in trace
Of red and black was o'er his face ;
And while a slender form he reared,
Lithe as a panther's it appeared.

XXXVI.

Upon his heart his hand he pressed,
And to the stranger bowed his crest ;
Then to the Hah-yah-do-yah* said,
Who near him stood, " my Sachems call !"
Next to the stranger, " come !" his tread
Bent toward the palisaded wall,
Where the long council-house appeared
Beneath a row of hemlocks reared.

XXXVII.

They entered, soon the Sachems came ;
The circle crouched upon the floor ;
The pipe its customed circuit bore ;
And then the stranger reared his frame,

* The " Pipe-bearer," or aid to the Atotarho.

Extended in his brawny hand
The wampum, and in accents bland
To Thurenserah said, who sat
In front upon his tufted mat,
“Ta-wen-deh Yon-non-de-yoh’s talk

To the great Atotarho brings ;
He seeks to plant the tree of Peace,
Water it, bid its boughs increase,
And then to hide the tomahawk

Under the pleasant shade it flings,
And hard the earth above to tread,
Until it is like rock o’erspread !
Then round the tree lock Friendship’s chain,
And never let it break again.

‘Great Atotarho, come!’ says he,
‘To my stone lodge upon the rock,
And there together will we lock
This chain unbroke and bright to be,
Until the grass shall cease to grow,
Until the waters cease to flow!’”

XXXVIII.

A guttural quick “yo-hah!” awoke
From the dark ring ; still no one spoke ;
Once more the pipe breathed round its smoke,

Then Thurenserah rose ;

His eye each Sachem’s countenance
Sought, and each Sachem to his glance

Said “good,” and his repose
Vanished into a lofty air ;

His head he reared, his arm he spread,
" Good words speaks Yon-non-de-yoh" said,
" The Atotarho will be there !"

QUEBEC.

XXXIX.

The fresh May morning's earliest light,
From where the richest hues were blended,
Lit on Cape Diamond's towering height
Whose spangled crystals glittered bright,
Thence to the castle roof descended,
And bathed in radiance pure and deep
The spires and dwellings of the steep.
Still downward crept the strengthening rays ;
The lofty crowded roofs below
And Cataraqui caught the glow,
Till the whole scene was in a blaze.
The scattered bastions—walls of stone
With bristling lines of cannon crowned,
Whose muzzles o'er the landscape frowned
Blackly through their embrasures—shone.
Point Levi's woods sent many a wreath
Of mist, as though hearths smoked beneath,
Whilst heavy folds of vapor gray
Upon St. Charles, still brooding, lay ;
The basin glowed in splendid dyes
Glassing the glories of the skies,
And chequered tints of light and shade
The banks of Orleans' Isle displayed.

XL.

To active life the scene awoke ;
 A brigantine her canvas spread,
 And as her sailor-songs outbroke
 Down toward the southern channel sped.
 A coureur in his bark canoe
 From Skannadario's boundless blue,
 Measured his oars, as swift along
 He glided, to his frontier song ;
 And a batteau forth slowly slipped
 Its little wooden anchors tripped,
 The boatmen at their poles low bending
 Their chorus in rude music blending.

XLI.

Quebec's great thoroughfare within
 Rose to the usual stir and din :
 With flowing plume, and mantle gay,
 The mounted noble went his way ;
 Chaunting, with crucifix on high,
 A train of monks swept slowly by ;
 With pike and corslet, grim and scarred,
 And measured step, on strode a guard.
 Coureurs de bois, loud chattering, went
 Beneath their packs of peltry bent ;
 The half-blood scout, with footstep light,
 Passed glancing round his rapid sight ;
 Hurons quick bore, with loping tread,
 Rich beavers toward the trader's shed ;

Woodmen with axes in their hands,
Hunters with hounds and rifles long,
And rough batteaumen, grouped in bands,
On sauntering, swelled the motley throng.

XLII.

Suddenly rose a murmur through
The busy street ; a word passed on ;
Eyes glanced around ; together drew
In groups the crowd ; with visage wan
At doors and windows mothers pressed
Their screaming infants to their breast ;
Here, with clenched teeth men grasped the knife,
As if to rush on desperate strife ;
Whilst others, there, cast looks of fear
On wives and children shuddering near ;
What word was that, so quick had made
The sun-bright scene so dark with shade !
'Twas "Thurenserah !" uttered now
In whispers deep, with cowering brow,
And spoken now in anger loud
With hand tight clasped and bearing proud.
"Ha ! here he comes !" exclaimed the scout,
"See how he throws his glance about !"
"The dog ! here, midst us, in Quebec !"
Muttered the noble, sudden check
Giving his steed, "as proud his feet
As though the forest leaves they beat ;
He seems to beard us with that tread,
And how he lifts his haughty head !"

“The demon ! see his glittering knife !”

Murmured a female casting look

On her pale child who by her shook,

“Christ save us from his murderous strife !”

“St. Francis, keep it far away !”

Exclaimed a passing Recollet.

“Ho, comrade !” a batteauman said,

“How feels the scalp upon your head !

Creeps it, as on that stormy night

We tugged upon St. Peter’s lake

When the moon showed with fitful light

That fearful sayage in our wake ?”

“Milet ! dost thou remember Roux,

Scalped by this fiend in his canoe ?”

A coureur asked, his bended back

Freeing an instant from his pack :

“Ashes are where Moyne’s cabin stood,

And his the torch that waked the fire,

His hatchet drank Le Renault’s blood,

His stake saw La Montayne expire,

The time our village in the dell

A prey to his wild fury fell !”

A rough Carignan settler said,

In a low voice of rage and dread,

To a fur-trader at his shed ;

“Allaire ! I’d give a year to strike

That haughty Indian with my pike !”

A youthful guardsman fiercely cried,

To an old veteran by his side,

“Hush Merle ! the Calumet behold,

Besides there tread his followers bold !”

Such sounds proclaimed the warrior's way,
Rising and sinking as his feet
Passed crouching hut and building gray,
That walled the long and winding street.

THE CALUMET.

XLIII.

On came the Atotarho's tread,
Leading the file of his tawny band ;
Like the crest of the elk rose his haughty head,
Whilst high he lifted in his hand
That sign of peace, the Calumet,
So sacred to the Indian soul,
With its stem of reed and its dark red bowl,
Flaunting with feathers white, yellow, and green,
Which seemed as if jewels were over them set,
As they glanced to the sun in their changeable sheen.

XLIV.

Courage that danger ne'er disturbed,
And a proud spirit never curbed,
Were throned upon his forehead bold,
And in his dark wild glance were told.
His usual close white robe he wore,
Its hue in emblems nearly lost ;
A short fusee his shoulders crossed ;
His head the bristling scalp-lock bore ;

A heron plume of snow hung o'er ;
(Memorial of that bird that swept
 Its way to Hah-yoh-wont-hah dread,
And whose pure plumage long was kept
 To deck the bravest warrior's head.)
Behind, his mat hung, richly dyed,
And dangling loosely at his side,
 His pouch of rabbit skin was seen ;
His limbs bright crimson leggings graced,
Worked moccasins his feet encased,
 And in the sunshine gleaming keen,
His hatchet o'er his mat was slung,
Whilst his long knife before him hung.

XLV.

His warriors also bore fusee,
 Hatchet and knife, with bearing proud ;
But not a sign showed enmity,
 “ Hai ! hai ! ” they sounded oft and loud.
Thus down St. Louis' Street, that led
To the Place d'Armes all slowly sped,
And there they checked their lofty tread.

THE TALK.

XLVI.

The castle's council chamber, long
And narrow, raftered low and strong :
On a raised chair sat Frontenac,
A score of nobles at his back,

Whilst pikemen in two rows before
Stretched to the threshold of the door.

XLVII.

The sunshine through the casement streamed,
Filling with golden glow the room,
On corslet, casque, and pikehead gleamed,
And danced on sword, fusee, and plume.
But the wide portal open flew ;
Five forms strode up the avenue,
By the grim bristling pikemen made,
The file the Atotarho leading,
The rest close after, each a Brave,
In a Brave's weapons each arrayed,
Seeming to see nought, stern and grave,
Yet subtly every object heeding.

XLVIII.

As Thurenserah slowly passed,
Around his eagle look he cast,
Smiling with scorn as pike and gun
Flashed all around him in the sun.

No pause he made, until his tread
Placed him two paces from the chair
Where Frontenac, with kindling air,
Sat gazing ; then in broken speech,
Whilst swept his arm a haughty reach,
The youthful warrior said :

“ Great Yon-non-de-yoh whispered ‘ Come ! ’
To Dawn of Day, and he is here,

E'en in great Yon-non-de-yoh's home ;
The Atotarho knows not fear,
For a great Brave is Dawn of Day :
What doth my Canada father say ?"

XLIX.

A breathless pause ; at length 'twas broke
By Frontenac, as thus he spoke :
" My Sachem, dwelling o'er the sea,
To his red children speaks through me—
Why should the Ongue-Honwee host
Against me strike the battle-post !
Why should my young men vainly cry
For succor at their burning stake !
Why should my lightnings round them wake,
Bidding their boldest warriors die !
Why should our pathway with a cloud
The brave Ho-de-no-sonne shroud !
I listen as the west wind comes,
Its errand in my ear it hums ;
It says—I bear the shriek and groan
From distant Missillimakinak
To Yon-non-de-yoh's lodge of stone,
A dreary, long, and bloody track.
These things have riven my heart with pain,
But let us now make bright the chain.
We'll smoke the Cālumet together,
And on our path will rest the glow,
The soft warm glow of Summer weather,

Not Winter's chilling robes of snow.

This belt preserves my words!

We'll plant the peace-tree deeply now,
So that its shade shall steep each brow ;
And no more let the fires of wrath
Be kindled in the battle-path

By deeds or singing-birds.

See, Thurenserah ! yon bright pile
Of gifts will make thy warriors smile !
Fusees, to bring the fleet moose low :
Rackets, to hunt him in the snow ;
Blankets, within whose downy fold,
The sires can brave the bitterest cold ;
Sashes, to bind the robes of skin ;
Beads for the tawny moccasin ;
Trinkets to make the squaws more bright ;
Paints fitting warriors for the fight ;
Powder and ball, to scathe with flame
The foe, and heap the lodge with game ;
Leggings that match the ruddy blaze ;
Kettles to boil the golden maize ;
And look ! let Thurenserah spread
Round him this mantle rich and red,
Worthy an Atotarho's sight,
Who's deeds have made his name so bright."

L.

The warrior stirred not from his place,
But reared his tall light form more tall,

And said, whilst letting, with free grace,
Upon his arm the mantle fall :—
“ When, in his snowy-winged canoe,
First Walking Thunder* crept to view,
On Cataraqui's flood,
The Adirondack dogs the knife
Against my people held in strife,
Red ever with their blood.
(So by the oldest sires avouched,
In Winter, in the lodges crouched ;)
And though these dogs now trembling, feel
The scornful stampings of our heel,
Then did our fathers know their wrath,
And die within their bloody path.
Beside that broad and lovely lake
Where dwells the Prophet of the winds,
Who, if no offering mortals make
Passing his lodge of rock, unbinds
His rushing fury o'er the wave,
And whelms them in a watery grave;
Herding with those base dogs, the fires
Of Walking Thunder fiercely flashed
Against the bosoms of our sires,
And down to earth their bravest dashed,
Sudden, as when the lightning's bound
Cleaves the proud hemlock to the ground.
They made our trembling warriors bow,
Warriors who only bowed before
To Hah-wen-ne-yo; from the roar

* Champlain.

And flash of Walking Thunder's wrath,
Their feet flew o'er a briery path,
And long they veiled their humble brow.

LI.

" But the wise Charistooni* came,
And gave the dust where slept the flame
To our awed sires. From that bright hour,
Their scalp-locks loftier, loftier, rose,
They climbed the mountain of their power,
They poured destruction on their foes;
Each warrior's lodge with scalps was filled,
We swam within the blood we spilled.
Not only Adirondacks bowed,
When o'er them passed our tempest-cloud,
But Huron, Erie, Illini,
Ottawa, Pequod, bent the knee,
Until turned every red man pale,
Where'er was seen our stealthy trail;
And where our wandering footsteps led,
The earth was strown, like leaves, with dead.

LII.

" Then the good Charistooni placed
The chain in Corlear's friendly hands;
Since, side by side, the game we've chased,

* The Dutch were so called by the Iroquois.

And still the tree we planted stands,
This belt preserves my talk !
Oft has the Atotarho smoked
The pipe with Corlear, his white brother,
And oft have we the smiles invoked
Of Hah-wen-ne-yo on each other ;
Deep lies our tomahawk !
If Yon-non-de-yoh, then, the chain
Would place in Thurenserah's grasp,
And make it free from every stain,
The links must Corlear also clasp,
And Yon-non-de-yoh, with his hand
Upon his heart, by Corlear stand,
A brother."

—"Nay, it cannot be!"

Thus broke in fiery Frontenac :
"The mighty Sachems o'er the sea
Have dug the hatchet from the ground,
The knife must gleam, the war-whoop sound ;
Ne'er Yon-non-de-yoh bends the knee,
Or from the war-path turns him back !"
"Then!" and the Atotarho dashed
The mantle down, with eye that flashed,
And spurned it with disdain ;
"Then shall the hatchet still be red,
And still the sky with clouds be spread ;
See! Thurenserah's scornful tread
Is on the broken chain !"
"This to my face!" cried Frontenac,
Upstarting, "Seize him!"—In his track
The savage turned—one bound he made,

His hatchet gleamed, and low was laid
A pikeman on the floor ;
Another bound, another blow,
Beneath his feet another foe
Was gasping in his gore ;
A third, and, with a war-whoop shrill,
That pierced all ears with deafening thrill,
He vanished through the door ;
Over his tribesmen fierce, who stood
Stern, fighting, till they fell in blood,
Nobles and pikemen pour.
Across the court the chieftain flies,
One struggle more—the sentry dies ;
Haste, haste, thy need is sore !
Ope, ope the sally-port ! thy flight
Thy foemen press with stern delight,
Thy warriors are before.
Joy, joy ! the sally-port is spread !
And, with loud whoop and winged tread,
He plunges midst his tribesmen red,
And with quick words he points ahead—
All vanish from the square ;
Up through St. Louis' Street they dash,
Corslet and pike behind them flash,
And shots at rapid periods crash,
But onward still they bear.
All, wondering, view the warriors flee,
In their left hands the clutched fusee,
The hatchet in their right,
Batteausman, hunter, coureur, scout,
Show their surprise by clamorous shout,

Women shriek wild with fright ;
Yet scarce is marked the tawny crowd
Before, like passage of a cloud,
They shoot athwart the sight ;
But ere they gain the walls, a band
Of hunters in their pathway stand,
Poured from a little inn at hand,
(Roused by Ta-wen-deh, who had sought
The place at Frontenac's quick thought,
By a side alley thither brought,)

And deadly fire throw in ;
Hatchets and knives and wood-blades flash,
Fusees and rifles blend their crash,

Whoop, shout, and scream their din ;
Bosom to bosom, eye to eye,
Pale-face and red-skin sink to die,
Blood gushes through the street ;
Near and more near the armed array
Of guardsmen come to grasp their prey ;
Still cut, still cut, wild Braves ! your way !

Still urge, still urge your feet !
Haoh !* Ha-wen-ne-yo's smile is cast
Upon them yet—they reach at last
The walls—the sentries low they bring,
The massive gates they open swing,

Nought now their way retards,
And turning, Thurenserah throws
His hatchet with a look that glows
In glaring fury at his foes ;

* An exclamation in Iroquois, expressive of joy or triumph.

Then, as dash near the guards,
Vanishes with his dusky band
Amidst the tangled woods at hand.

END OF CANTO SECOND.

CANTO THIRD.

THE WAR-SONG.
THE HUNTERS.
THE BATTEAU.

THE CARIGNAN
VILLAGE.
THE BRIGANTINE.



CANTO THIRD.

THE WAR-SONG.

I.

“ HooH! hooH! how the panther springs,
As flies the deer on affrighted wings!
HooH! hooH! how he rends his prey!
So will the On-on-dah-gahs slay!
Hoop! whoop! how he rends his prey!
So will the On-on-dah-gahs slay!

“ HooH! hooH! how the eagle screams,
As the blood of the fawn from his talons streams!
HooH! hooH: how the woods ring out!
So will the On-on-dah-gahs shout!
HooH! whoop! how the woods ring out!
So will the On-on-dah-gahs shout!”

II.

Thus, the next morning that beheld
The Atotarho safe again
At On-on-dah-gah, loudly swelled
The war-song in its angriest strain.

Revenge on Yon-non-de-yoh ! high
Went up the fierce and bloody cry ;
Revenge on all his race ! their ire
Flashed into furious, frenzied fire ;
Revenge ! revenge ! it filled the day,
It e'en disturbed the midnight's sway,
Its sound the Atotarho swelled,
The echo wild his warriors yelled,
The old men, women, children, all
Blended their voices in the call,
Revenge ! revenge ! till every breast
Had but that passion for its guest.

III.

And now round flame and war-post red
Within the castles crowded square,
The wrathful Atotarho led
His Braves, and raised his chauntings there,
Joined by their tones, whilst every bound
Beat to the song with muffled sound.

1.

“ Hooh ! hooh ! how the sharpened knife
Will gleam again in the war-path's strife !
Hooh ! hooh ! like the lightning red,
The On-on-dah-gahs will flash in dread !
Hooh ! whoop ! like the lightning red,
The On-on-dah-gahs will dart in dread !

2.

“ Hooh ! hooh ! how the hungry fire
Will wrap the French in its leaping ire !
Hooh ! hooh ! like the torrent's flood,
The On-on-dah-gah's will rush in blood !
Hooh ! whoop ! like the torrent's flood,
The On-on-dah-gahs will rush in blood ! ”

Breaking the song, above his head
The Atotarho flashed a sweep
With his bright hatchet ; down it sped,
And in the post was buried deep.
The next one gave a piercing yell,
And down his hatchet also fell.
Another struck—another—shrill
Whoop upon whoop resounding, till
Blows rained upon the post so fast,
In fragments round 'twas strown at last.

IV.

The Atotarho clutched his axe
And shook it high with fiercest gaze,
Then—scores of warriors in his tracks—
Rushed through the palisades, the maize,
And bounding to the water-side
Where, from the soft white bass-wood hollowed,
Three war canoes with withes were tied,
Entered the first ; his warriors followed

Till all were filled, and the furious throng
With flashing paddles then left the shore,
Skimming the river with whoop and song
Upon their war-path of flame and gore.

THE HUNTERS.

v.

'Twas one of June's delicious eves ;
Sweetly the sunset rays were streaming,
Here tangled in the forest leaves,
There on the Cataraqui gleaming.
A broad glade lay beside the flood
Where tall dropped trees and bushes stood.
A cove its semicircle bent
Within, and through the sylvan space,
Where lay the light in splintered trace,
A moose, slow grazing, went ;
Twisting his long, curved, flexile lip
Now the striped moosewood's leaves to strip,
And now his maned neck, short and strong,
Stooping, between his fore-limbs long
Stretched widely out, to crop the plant
And tall rich grass that clothed the haunt.
On moved he to the basin's edge,
Mowing the swordflag, rush, and sedge,
And, wading short way from the shore
Where spread the waterlilies o'er
A pavement green with globes of gold,
Commenced his favorite feast to hold.

VI.

So still the scene—the river's lapse
Along its course gave hollow sound,
With some raised wavelet's lazy slaps
On log and stone around ;
And the crisp noise the moose's cropping
Made, with the water lightly dropping
From some lithe, speckled, lily stem
Entangled in his antlers wide,
Thus scattering many a sparkling gem
Within the gold-cups at his side.
Sudden he raised his head on high,
Oped his great nostrils, fixed his eye,
Reared half his giant ear-flaps, stood,
Between his teeth a half-chewed root,
And sidelong on the neighboring wood
Made startled glances shoot.
Resuming then his stem, once more,
He bent, as from suspicion free,
His bearded throat the lilies o'er,
And cropped them quietly.

VII.

Minutes passed on in such repose,
No sound within the scene arose,
Save, as before, the river's tinklings ;
The rustling that the feeding moose
Made midst the lilies, and the sprinklings
Each mass of roots he reared let loose ;

But now a rifle cracked,—he started,
And through the ruffled basin darted,
Found quickly the opposing side,
And, hoofs loud clicking, left the spot,
His frame extended in a wide,
Headlong, yet awkward trot ;
But scarce an arrow's flight he bore,
When burst another quick flat sound,
And, with drawn limbs, and gushing gore,
He floundered on the ground.
Two hunters rushed then from the shade,
And whilst one drew his woodman's blade
Across the victim's throat,
The other whooped out shrill and keen,
That rang along the silent scene
In startling, deafening note.

VIII.

As from their prey they strip the skin,
Two other hunters enter in,
Bearing a deer with staggering strength,
And on the greensward cast their length.
Now voices all around are heard,
The leaves by hasty feet are stirred,
And soon the whole gay hunter band
Within the sylvan hollow stand,
Casting their wildwood game around
Until it thickly strews the ground.

IX.

Now the golden light has slid
From the hemlock's pyramid ;
Now the maple's dome is dark,
Flashing late with lustrous spark ;
And within the solemn woods,
Twilight, dusk and shimmering, broods.

X.

Soon the pile of sticks and leaves
Fire from flint and steel receives,
And the flesh, in juicy flakes,
Odors rich and pungent makes ;
Seated on the pleasant grass,
Jest and song the hunters pass ;
Then, the rites to hunger paid,
Careless every limb is laid
On the sweet and dewy glade.

XI.

" 'Twas a long shot which struck that goose,"
Says one, " he beat the air so far !"
" Yes," cries another, " and the moose
Some caution cost us ; hey, Bizarre ?"
" Had he but been that fiend-like boy,
The Atotarho, greater joy,"
Answered Bizarre, " within would glow !
I saw a wolf, an hour ago,
Down in the Wild-cat streamlet's glen,

And his fierce rolling eye was like,
I thought, to that young demon's, when
I saw him low Jerandean strike,
Before the Inn of the Canoe,
When his wild band came trooping through
St. Louis' Street, like panthers leaping ;
Oh, that an instant brief he stood
In my good rifle Bee-flight's keeping,
He'd never spill another's blood !"
" Why did not," gay another cried,
" Bee-flight bore through him in the strife ?"
" As hard as gun e'er did it tried,
But fortune favored not ; beside
It had to guard its master's life !"
" Well, let the Atotarho go,"
A third one said ; " we cannot reach
His fierce bloodthirsty heart with speech—
Come, come, Bizarre, let pleasure flow !
Sing, sing ! the 'Happy Hunters' swell,
We all can trip the chorus well !"

XII.

Bizarre hemmed loud, then poured amain,
Till the woods rang, his forest strain :—

1.

" Happy and free
Hunters are we,
Free as the winds that roam so wide ;

Camping at night,
Up with the light,
Hunters are happy whatever betide !
Shout out the chorus then,
Swing it out louder, men !
Sorrow or care cannot with us abide,
Hunters are happy whatever betide !

2.

“ Happy and free
Hunters are we,
Free as the clouds that above us glide ;
Scorning the worst,
Hunger and thirst,
Hunters are happy whatever betide !
Shout out the chorus then,
Swing it out louder, men !
Sorrow or care cannot with us abide,
Hunters are happy whatever betide !”

XIII.

On pass the hours : the camp-fire bright
Steeps the near leaves in bronzing light,
And shifting, plays o'er the figures laid,
In the generous glow, on the grassy glade.
The whetsaw's tinkle, the owl's loud shout,
And the ceaseless chime of the frogs, ring out ;
With the neighboring Cataraqui's rush
Making profounder the midnight hush.

XIV.

Silent are the sentries sitting ;
One feels dozing visions flitting
O'er his brain, while Fancy, teeming,
Riots through the other's dreaming.

XV.

Creeping, creeping, onward creeping,
Toward the sentries, helpless sleeping,
Amidst the gloom
Two figures come—
Are they wolves upon their way ?
Creeping, creeping, on still creeping,
Then, like lightning, upward leaping,
Fall they on their slumbering prey.

XVI.

Two flashing blows, two gasps, once more
Silence broods for an instant o'er ;
Wild forms are then in a circle round
The slumbering hunters—a blended sound
Of crashing rifles, a whooping bound
Of the figures wild, and the camp-fire's ground
Is covered with shapes that fall and rise,
Rise and fall, with shouts and cries
Pealing, whilst savage fury plies
Its murderous work : as Bizarre sank low,
An ember launched upward a tongue-like glow ;

He saw above him, in glimmering trace,
The hated, yet feared, Atotarho's face ;
The next, and the swift curved knife is gleaming,
His scalp at the belt of the chief is streaming.
Out peals the Iroquois' war-song,—their feet
In a dance of mad joy the green forest-glade beat.

“Hooh ! hooh ! how the panther springs,
As flies the deer on affrighted wings !
Hooh ! hooh ! how he rends his prey !
So do the On-on-dah-gahs slay !
Hooh ! whoop ! how he rends his prey !
So do the On-on-dah-gahs slay !”

Then Thurenserah points before
With his smeared knife, and in the wood
Darts with his tawny Braves once more
For other scenes of woe and blood.

THE BATTEAU.

xvii.

Morning is brightening with golden smiles
The beautiful “Lake of the Thousand Isles.”
Scattered all over the green flood lie
Islands profuse as the stars in the sky ;
Here, scarce yielding a few trees room,
There, bearing upward a forest of gloom,

Breaking the wave, now, in broad expanses,
That flashed out like steel in the morning's glances,
And now into vistas whose either side
Darkened with intermixed shadows the tide.

XVIII.

A duck, beside an isle of wood,
Within a watery streak was steering,
Dipping his green head in the flood,
When, quick his bill of yellow rearing,
With a loud whiz he flew away,
As a gigantic war-canoe
Filled with a grim and plumed array
Of warriors wild came shooting through :
Amidst them, with his look of pride,
Was Thurenserah, his keen eye
Scanning the tangled shore beside,
Till, toward a weeping elm-tree nigh,
Which in a thickly foliaged wreath
Down to the wave its branches threw,
He waved his arm, and underneath
Instantly vanished the canoe.

XIX.

It was not long ere voices gay
Broke on the air, and a batteau
Moved up the furrowing narrow way
With its rough crew in double row,
Each bending shoulder strongly bracing
Against the pole with struggling strain,

Then, every one his way retracing,
To stoop down to the toil again.
The long curved craft, the jackets red
Of the bent boatmen, gliding, spread
In sharp, soft lined, yet shaken trace
Upon the water's rippling face.

xx.

"The sunset's light, I trust," said one,
"Antoine, will see our toiling done."
"Aye, Vigne, sound sleep this night we'll win
Fort Frontenac's strong walls within."
"That's more than we," Vigne answering cried,
"Gained the last night—those screams and whoops
We heard, though in the distance, tried
My manhood, comrades,—deeply droops
My heart within me as I think
Of those poor hunters that we saw
At noon along the river's brink ;
For, comrades," and a look of awe
He glanced around him, "we all know
That Thurenserah and his Braves
Are on the war-path!"

"Be it so,"

Broke in a third, "we'll not be slaves,
We, boatmen, we, to abject fear ;
I did not, Vigne, thy whoops e'en hear :
Those maringouins !* swarm on swarm

* A little white gnat found on the banks of the St. Lawrence.

Thronged all the night about my form ;
The little white fiends seemed as mad
To drink up all the blood I had."

" Cease," said Antoine, " the morn, at least,
Is bright ; we taste it like a feast ;
I'll sing the boatman's well-known air,
And you must all the chorus bear."

" Push along, boys, push along, boys,
Merrily, cheerily push along ;
And whilst our prow makes merry music,
We'll too raise the song.
We'll too raise the song, my boys,
Swift as we push along ;
Each to his pole, boys, bend to each pole, boys,
Merrily, cheerily push along ;
And whilst the waters ripple round us,
We'll too raise the song.

" Push along, boys, push along, boys,
" Merrily, cheerily"—

" Hush !" said Vigne,

" I saw a flash amidst those leaves
Beside, as of some weapon keen !"

" Pshaw ! some white birch thy sight deceives,"
Impatiently another spoke—
" On, let the song again be woke !"

" Push along, boys, push along, boys,
Merrily, cheerily push along ;

And whilst the wave"—

“Stay! stay the strain!

There is no wind, and yet I see
Yon thicket fluttering! Mark again
That gleam. Ha! from behind this tree
I saw a scalp-lock peer. Beware!
My comrades.” Just then on the air
Broke crashes quick, with yell on yell
From the close banks. The boatmen fell—
Some dead, some on their knees. Once more
A volley rings, and from the shore
To the batteau fierce figures bound,
Swift weapons flash—shrieks, groans, resound.

XXI.

“Spare! spare! great Atotarho,” cries
Vigne, as his throat a warrior grasps;
But the knife plunges; low he grasps:
His rent scalp swings before his eyes,
And with a shuddering groan he dies.
Then whoops the Atotarho keen,
The warriors vanish from the scene;
And the wild isle its echoes wakes,
As forth the savage war-song breaks.

“Hooh! hooh! how the eagle screams,
As the blood of the fawn from his talons streams!
Hooh! hooh! how the woods ring out!
So do the On-on dah-gahs shout!

Hooh ! whoop ! how the woods ring out !
So do the On-on-dah-gahs shout ! ”

Whilst the batteau with its strewed dead,
Now straight, now sidewise, swiftly sped,
A face here hanging—there a limb,
O'er its stained sides : a picture grim ;
Down at the mercy of the flood,
Marking its course with trickling blood.

THE CARIGNAN VILLAGE.

XXII.

The sun had vanished—a golden rim
Striped the western horizon's wall ;
The forest arbors were fading dim,
Twilight was letting his mantle fall.

XXIII.

'Twas a sweet landscape. A village stood
Amidst a clearing enclosed with wood.
Log-built cabins, a palisade,
Pierced with two gateways, around arrayed ;
Thence to the Cataraqui's glass,
Were wavelike meadows of velvet grass ;
Grain fields growing, and pastures green,

Fallows spotted with stumps and black,
And forest-choppings—a choked-up scene,
Showing the axe's recent track.
All else was a wilderness, thickening to sight,
Each moment beneath the first shadows of night.

XXIV.

Oxen were plodding like snails along
To the open gates ; and with careless song
The settler was lounging behind. The bleat
Of flocks approaching their folds was sweet.
Along the paths of the winding lanes
Herd-bells were tinkling in fitful strains,
The kine now stalking, now stopping to feed,
Whilst frequently neighed some scampering steed.
Hunters from woodland avenues came
Followed by hounds, and burthened with game ;
And from the far hill-lots echood free
The sounding axe and the crashing tree.
A sylvan picture, this wildwood land
Sketches alone with its rough fresh hand.

XXV.

Over the brow of a hill that towered
Above this landscape—in woods embowered,
The shaggy head of a cedar shot
In a slanting line from a hollow spot,
Tangled with brushwood, and in its breast
Deeply his limbs had an Indian pressed ;

Cautiously, steadfastly, through the green,
He drew his eye o'er the village scene,
Then gliding down to the hollow, where
Each shadowy bush was an Indian's lair,
The Atotarho also found
The depths of one of the thickets round.

XXVI.

A youthful couple beguiled the night,
With talk by the social candlelight.
"One short year, as man and wife,
We, Marie, have skimmed the stream of life !
One short year from to-day : hast thought
Of the lovely picture the sunset wrought
The eve we wed ? My sire, who then
Danced at our glad merry-making, said
It put him in mind of the day he wed !
You know he was one of Carignan's men !
And old Lemoyne says, none more brave
E'er saw the flag of Carignan wave.
There hangs his sabre, all rusty and dull !
I wonder if ever the blade I'll pull
From its steel scabbard ! Ta-wen-deh the scout,
I hear, a week since told a few,
Within the Inn of the Canoe,
At Quebec, that again with the Iroquois out ;
That Thurenserah, inflamed with wrath
From Frontenac's treatment, had taken the path ;
And furthermore, Marie, a coureur saw,

Whilst threading the Thousand Isles above
With his load of skins, a sight of awe,
Where swift on a point the current drove.
Dost thou remember the large batteau
That stayed at our village two nights ago,
With old Antoine, Le Bas, and Vigne,
And the rest, with the dance on the starlit green !
Well, there a batteau was, stained with gore,
With heads and limbs hung ghastly o'er—
Beached on the point : he approached with dread,
There lay the crew—our poor boatmen—dead,
Scalped and mangled, displaying plain
That Iroquois devils his friends had slain.
Well, Marie, I'm ready to draw at word.
With my father's heart my father's sword !
Hark ! the wind rages, a stormy night !
I trust that to-morrow will rise up bright !"
To-morrow ! Ah, folly ! Ah, vanity !
Who—who can be sure that to-morrow he'll see !

XXVII.

Midnight came, in its sablest hue,
With clouds on a roaring wind that flew ;
Nearer and nearer the dawn of day,
Wrapped in its slumber the village lay.

XXVIII.

From the gusty forests passed
Swift approaching shapes at last.

They force the gates of the palisade—
There stand the dwellings in gloomy shade ;
Scatter the Iroquois far and near ;
A moment more, and their whoop of fear
Peals out, succeeded by crash on crash,
As inward their hatchets the frail doors dash ;
To his rifle in vain the Carignan flies,
The hatchet gleams after—he sinks, he dies !
The daughter is brained as she shrieks in dread,
The hairs of the grandsire are steeped in red,
Mothers, imploring in anguish, fall,
Infants are dashed against threshold and wall.
Ah, the young husband ! he starts from his dream !
Ah, the young wife ! she but wakens to scream !
Those whoops, those shrill shrieks, those deep groans all
around !
The Iroquois ! God ! can no refuge be found !
They glance from the casement, wild forms here and there
Shoot past, weapons glitter, shots stream through the air !
The husband has drawn forth the sword of his sire,
And he stands by the barred door with aspect of fire,
Whilst trembling, half frenzied, his Marie is nigh.
“ Oh, husband ! oh, husband ! ” her agonised cry ;
“ My brain reels ! oh, Virgin, most holy ! we flee
In this time of our need for protection to thee !
Oh, husband that fresh burst of flame ! mighty powers !
It comes from the roof of Lemoyne, next to ours !
Let us hide ! no, the torch will be here too, we ’ll gain
The forest, we ’ll steal through the herds in the lane !
Come, husband ! oh, husband, come ! haste ! let ’s begone !

Oh, God ! 'tis too late ! here their glances are drawn !
That terrible chieftain ! he 's bounding this way !
' Thurenserah ! ' these women shriek out as they pray !
Thurenserah ! oh, husband, no help for us now,
We die ! " and she veiled in mute terror her brow,
Ha, that shock ! she screams wildly, down crashes the door,
And a Brave bursts upon them with tomahawk o'er.
" Spare, spare, Thurenserah ! " but downward it sinks,
The blood of the husband laid prostrate it drinks ;
The Brave plants his foot on the neck of the slain,
And down falls the gore-dripping hatchet again ;
The wife plunges headlong, her sorrows are o'er,
The couple shall sit at the hearthstone no more.

XXIX.

Still flies round with delight the brand,
Flames flash out upon every hand ;
Over, the clouds are bathed in red ;
A glaring horizon around is spread ;
The tops of the woods seem to stagger in smoke ;
All the wild life of their depths has awoke,
Eagle and panther, and wolf and bear,
Screaming and howling and snarling there ;
Blent with the Iroquois war-song loud,
Peeling from out of the smoky shroud.

' Hooh ! hooh ! how the sharpened knife
Has gleamed again in the war-path's strife !

Hooh! 'hooh! like the lightning red,
The On-on-dah-gahs have flashed in dread!
Hooh! whoop! like the lightning red,
The On-on-dah-gahs have flashed in dread!"

At midnight the village drew slumber's sweet breath,
At day-dawn 'twas hushed in the stillness of death;
At midnight roofs rose in the wild gusty air,
At day-dawn a waste of dark ashes was there;
Whilst the fierce Atotarho, more vengeance to claim,
Was again on his war-path of carnage and flame.

THE BRIGANTINE.

XXX.

In the soft twilight's darkening glow,
Near the wild shores of Ontario,
Where points of wilderness form a bay,
Now changing its hues to one shade of gray,
Three crowded canoes of Iroquois Braves
Are gliding; in one Thurenserah, now
Bending his ear to the glassy waves,
Ahead then looking with anxious brow.
Sudden he speaks, and the prows turn quick
To where a cluster of spruces thick
Slants o'er the waters, their shaggy woof
Shaping there an impervious roof,

And in the black shadow beneath it thrown
Each glides, and the scene to all seeming is lone.
But dashes are heard, and a brigantine creeps
Round one of the points to the push of her sweeps;
Then dropping her anchor the beautiful bark
Motionless sits in the gathering dark.

XXXI.

A group of seamen surrounds the mast;
The stream of their converse is free and fast.
"The Griffin," says one, "was strong and fleet;
I saw her, some two-score years ago,
Launched on Niagara's rapid sheet,
Near where the cataract rolls below;
The Sieur La Salle and his gallant crew,
And good father Hennepin, learned and meek,
Were on her decks as she downward drew,
And kissed, with a curtsey, the river's cheek;
The Iroquois Atotarho too,
Ku-an was there, and with his glance
Of dread stood Ta-yo-nee beside, who slew
His sister whom Frontenac brought from France.
They were then on the war-path in which they fell,
Both of the chieftains knew I well!"
"What tales," said another, "of blood we hear
From the now Atotarho; deeds of fear
By this young Thurenserah so constant are done,
That a score of warriors he seems in one!
The Carignan village St. Mié you know,
Near the foot of the Thousand Isles—it stood

In its pleasant clearing three days ago,
 'Tis a waste of ashes now, slaked with blood ;
The Atotarho led his band
On it with hatchet and with brand ;
Not a dwelling now rises there—
Not a soul did his fury spare—
Frontenac well the day should rue,
When the wrath of the savage he kindled anew."

XXXII.

The frog's hoarse bassoon, and loon's tremulous shriek,
Alone the deep hush of the scene now awake ;
The sailor thinks fond on his watch, of the spot
Where rises mid vineyards his dear native cot.
Once more his free footsteps press valley and plain ;
Once more the glad harvest is sounding its strain ;
He is there—he is there in his home of delight—
He starts, he looks round, the lake gleams on his sight,
But the starlighted hush again falls on his soul,
And his thoughts again fly far away to their goal.

XXXIII.

A haze has now spread a thick mantle of gray,
The waters are hidden, the stars shrink away ;
From the roof of dark cedars quick movements begin,
How silently, silently, onwards they win !
Still silently, silently, every canoe
Still urged the gray waters invisibly through,

Like barks from the spirit-land, spectral and dim,
So still fall the paddles, so light is their skim ;
Still silently, silently, onwards they glide,
They reach without question the brigantine's side ;
Forms spring up the vessel—hush ! hush ! not a sound !
They peer o'er the bulwarks, the sleepers are round :
They grasp now their hatchets, all caution is past,
To the deck, to the deck, they are bounding at last !
Whoop ! whoop ! Thurenserah the foremost is there !
Whoop ! whoop ! how their shouts ring abroad on the air !
Upstart the pale sleepers, and wildered by fright,
And with senses still swimming, they stand to the fight,
Hand to hand is the battle, clash cutlass and knife !
Clash steel-pike and hatchet ; wild, wild is the strife !
Ho, the young Atotarho ! his eyeballs are flame,
And the blood of his foes is splashed over his frame !
At the sweep of his hatchet one plunges in death !
At the dart of his knife gasps another for breath !
God save the poor seamen ! no succor is nigh !
Christ save the poor seamen ! they struggle to die !
They are borne to the deck, o'er the sides are they cast ;
The water grows red round the brigantine fast,
Till nothing remains of the crew but the dead,
Then over the vessel deep silence is spread.
Off darts the canoes, smoke the doomed bark surrounds,
On the lines of the rigging flame flashes and bounds,
Red pennons stream out from the red-circled mast,
A glare all around on the vapor is cast,
The waters blush crimson ; but wildly and high
The Iroquois war-song goes up to the sky.

“ Hoo! hoo! how the hungry fire
Has wrapped the French in its leaping ire!
Hoo! hoo! like the torrent's flood,
The On-on-dah-gahs have rushed in blood!
Hoo! whoop! like the torrent's flood,
The On-on-dah-gahs have rushed in blood!

END OF CANTO THIRD.

CANTO FOURTH.

THE THANKSGIVING
DANCE.

THE DANCE OF THE
GREAT SPIRIT.

KAH-KAH.

THE EXPEDITION.

THE BIVOUAC.

THE ABDUCTION.

THE RESCUE AND
DEATH.



CANTO FOURTH.

THE THANKSGIVING DANCE.

I.

BRIGHT ushering in the day of feast
For Thurenserah's safe return
From his red path of anger stern,
The dawn was flickering in the east.
As the rich tints began to spread,
Brave, Sachem, sire, boy, matron, maid,
By the Priest To-ne-sah-hah led
In a long file, slow treading, wound
Thrice the Tcar-jis-ta-yo around ;
Then through the maize fields sought the shade,
Where lay the customed offering-glade.
There at a pile of faggots dry,
Heaped with dew-bespangled forest flowers,
Just gathered from their sylvan bowers,
(The Atotarho standing by,)
As the sun showed its upper rim,
The gray-haired priest, with upturned eye,
To Hah-wen-ne-yo raised the hymn.
The sun-fired calumet he bore,
Sending its light smoke-offering o'er.

Yah-hah! to us once more,
He returns to us once more."

1.

"Hah-wen-ne-yo! Mighty Spirit!
Humble thanks to thee we render.
Hah-wen-ne-yo! Spirit vast!
That to our loved Atotarho,
Atotarho, great and high,
Thou hast been a kind defender
In the war-path that is past,
War-path stained with deepest dye.
And that safe, O wise Creator!
Wise Creator, dwelling o'er!
He returns to us once more,
Yah-hah! to us once more,
He returns to us once more.

2.

"Hah-wen-ne-yo! Mighty Spirit!
Thou art to our League a father,
Hah-wen-ne-yo! Spirit good!
And around our Atotarho,
Atotarho, chief of fame,
Thou dost robe of safety gather
In the war-path past of blood,
War-path filled with blood and flame.
And thus safe, wise Hah-wen-ne-yo!
Wise Creator, dwelling o'er!
He returns to us once more.

II.

He ceased—struck steel and flint, and fire
Glittered in sparks upon the pyre ;
Then, as the offering sent its smoke
On high, the Braves their dance awoke ;
Whilst To-ne-sah-hah by the flame,
The rocking stamping ring within,
Praised still the Hah-wen-ne-yo's name,
Amidst the rude ga-nu-jah's* din.
But, as passed off the morning's shade,
The sacrificial rites were stayed
Until the sunset's dipping light,
When Thurenserah, at the head
Of all his Braves, would, in its sight,
The dance of Hah-wen-ne-yo tread.

III.

Pleasure meanwhile ruled every soul,
The bird-like ball swift soared on high ;
The straining racers sought the goal,
And mocking war-whoops rent the sky,

THE DANCE OF THE GREAT SPIRIT.

IV.

But now the sun, in its descent,
Its rich and stretching radiance bent ;

* The On on-dah-gah name for the Indian drum.

Suddenly To-ne-sah-hah beat
A great drum, planted in the square :
Ceased war-whoop shrill, paused flying feet,
The ball no longer whirled in air ;
And as once more together came
The village throng, his lodge from out,
Amidst a general joyful shout
Stepped Thurenserah's graceful frame,
The close white robe was o'er his breast ;
The snowy plume beside his crest ;
His right hand grasped a bow sketched o'er
With deeds ; his left an arrow bore.

v.

He strode with slow majestic pace
To where his Hoh-se-no-wahns* stood
Armed like himself ; then all the place
Left for the sacrificial wood.
Heading the long and dusky file,
At length the Atotarho checked
His footstep in the glade now decked
With the soft sunset's sinking smile.

vi.

The women lined in groups the scene,
Fastening upon the Braves their sight,
As they, upon the floor of green,
Prepared to celebrate the rite ;

* " Chief warriors " in the On-on-dah-gah tongue.

Whilst age and childhood sought the shade
That thickly edged the sylvan glade.

VII.

The Braves, with arrow and with bow
In either head, gazed steadfastly
Upon the sun, whose parting glow
Streamed down the glade's green vista free.
And as the west's rim felt its flame
The Atotarho forward came,
Quick swinging in a dance his frame ;
And in the mild and mellow blaze,
Where a soft golden carpet shone,
Began, in quavering guttural tone,
The Hah-wen-ne-yo's hymn to raise.

1.

“ Mighty, mighty Hah-wen-ne-yo ! Spirit pure and mighty !
hear us !
We thine own Ho-de-no-sonne, wilt thou be for ever
near us !
Keep the sacred flame still burning ! guide our chase ! our
planting cherish !
Make our warriors' hearts yet taller ! let our foes before us
perish !
Kindly watch our waving harvests ! make each Sachem's
wisdom deeper !
Of our old men, of our women, of our children be the
Keeper !
Mighty, holy Hah-wen-ne-yo ! Spirit pure and mighty !
hear us !

We thine own Ho-de-no-sonne, wilt thou be for ever
near us!

Yah-hah! for ever near us! wilt thou be for ever near us!

2.

“Mighty, mighty Hah-wen-ne-yo! thou dost, Spirit purest,
greatest!

Love thine own Ho-de-no-sonne, thou as well their foemen
hatest!

Panther's heart and eye of eagle, moose's foot and fox's
cunning,

Thou dost give our valiant people when the war-path's
blood is running;

But the eye of owl in daylight, foot of turtle, heart of
woman,

Stupid brain of bear in winter, to our valiant people's
foemen!

Mighty, holy Hah-wen-ne-yo! Spirit pure and mighty!
hear us!

We thine own Ho-de-no-sonne, wilt thou be for ever
near us!

Yah-hah! for ever near us! wilt thou be for ever near us!”

VIII.

As ceased the strain, the warrior band,
Arrow and bow reared high in hand,
Arranged their files, and wildly dashed
Into a dance with eyes that flashed:
Now toward the west, and now o'erhead,

Timing their chauntings to their tread ;
Whilst frequently the war-whoop rung
In thrilling cadence from their tongue ;
The dull dead drum-stroke sounding low,
Like the deep distant partridge-blow.

IX.

With mingled grace and dignity
The Atotarho led the dance ;
To Hah-wen-ne-yo now the knee
Bending, with lifted reverent glance,
Now springing to his feet, with eye
Fixed where the sun had fall'n below,
Leaving within the cloudless sky
A spot of tenderest, yellowest glow.

KAH-KAH.

X.

The rite was o'er—the throngs were gone ;
The lovely sylvan glade was lone.
Upon the air a delicate glimmer,
Twilight's first veil, began to shimmer ;
The sassafras commenced to mingle
With the soft air-breaths fluttering round,
O'erpowering, with its fragrance single,
The other odors of the ground ;

Whilst a young moon, with timid glance,
Looked down from heaven's undimmed expanse ;
Her touch so faint on all beneath,
It seemed 'twould vanish at a breath.

XI.

Along Kun-da-qua's* grassy side,
An arrow's passage from the glade,
In melting tints the waters dyed,
The beautiful Jiskoko strayed.
Oh, did she come of him to dream
Beside the solitary stream !
Her sighs to mingle with the breeze
That crept so softly through the trees !
She heard the river's murmuring flow,
Filling the spot with music low ;
She saw the branches by the wind
In light and graceful motions moved,
And all were blended in her mind
With him so fondly, deeply loved.
The sound was like that voice her ear
Oft bent in breathless joy to hear ;
The softly swaying branch o'erhead
Was like that lithe and springing tread ;
Yet ah ! in vain, in vain, she knew
Love o'er her heart its witchery threw ;
The eagle, with his soaring crest,
Disdained the robin's lowly nest.

* The On-on-dah-gah name for the On-on-dah-gah River or Creek.

XII.

As thus she mused, from out the wood
 Sudden a Brave before her stood.
 Hatchet, fusee, and knife he bore,
 With the red cloak his shoulders o'er ;
 His brow was frowning, yet a smile
 Seemed called upon his face the while,
 Like a pale straggling moonbeam shot
 Within some wild and gloomy spot.

XIII.

She started, and a scream suppressed,
 Then lifted high her form, and turned ;
 But in her path, with laboring breast
 And a fierce eye like fire that burned,
 The warrior planted firm his tread,
 And in soft honied accents said :
 " Jiskoko seeks to leave in fear
 One who has loved her deep and long ;
 Will ne'er in Kah-kah's raptured ear
 The Robin trill responsive song ?"
 " Has not Jiskoko, Kah-kah oft
 Told that she cannot love ?"
 " Her heart
 At Thurenserah's glance is soft !"
 " Cease, cease, Jiskoko will depart !"
 " Not till she Kah-kah hears !—that slave,
 That Atotarho ! that mock Brave !
 That coward dog ! who does not dare

Like us to leave his bosom bare,
But ever with that robe of white
Keeps it close hidden from the sight,
As if he feared an eye should see
The deer-like heart within him—he
Shall not Jiskoko have!"

" Away,
Jiskoko will no longer stay!"

The warrior's strong grasp stayed her path,
His shape dilated with his wrath;
He clenched his hand as if to beat
Her trembling frame beneath his feet;
Then swept the frenzied tempest o'er,
And in soft tones he spoke once more:
"Listen! thou know'st a moon ago
We young men went to strike a blow
Against the distant Cherokees.
Look! beautiful Jiskoko sees
This little flower! their grassy floor
Of open woods is covered o'er
With blossoms thick as Night's bright eyes,
And brilliant as the glorious dyes
Of Hah-wen-ne-yo's bow, when he
Makes Tah-won-ne-whus* backward flee.
Their breath scents every wind that blows,
Like that Jiskoko's lips uncloze;
The moon is like Jiskoko's face,
The morn and eve her blushing cheeks,

* Tah-won-ne-whus means "lightning" in Iroquois.

And birds the hours with music chase,
 Sweetly as that Jiskoko speaks;
 Look ! my kah-we-yah* floats below,
 Jiskoko will with Kah-kah go
 To that bright land."

" Unclasp thy hold,
 How darest thou ! Set Jiskoko free !
 She will not go, fierce Brave, with thee !"
 " Then Kah-kah takes thee !" In the fold
 Of his strong arm her trembling frame
 He swept, and toward the river strode.
 Jiskoko shrieked, and forth the name
 (The deepest in her bosom shrined,
 The foremost ever in her mind)
 Of Thurenserah loudly flowed.

XIV.

As if that cry his presence woke,
 Out from the woods a figure broke.
 One hand a glittering hatchet clenched,
 The shrieking maid the other wrenched
 From the base Kah-kah, who, thus foiled
 In his dark purpose, back recoiled
 With burning rage, yet abject dread,
 Stamped wildly on his visage red,
 And gazed in fixed affrighted stare
 On Thurenserah towering there ;
 Who looked on him in turn, his form
 Loftily swelling with a storm

* Kah-we-yah, i. e. "canoe" in Iroquois.

Of high disdain, yet bursting wrath,
As if the reptile in his path
He'd crush ; but from his features passed
The anger, and he said at last,
Lifting his figure to his height,
With eye that shed disdainful light,
And pointing his contemptuous finger
Before him, " Why does Kah-kah linger ! "
Then as the wretch shrank, cowering low,
As if he would, yet dared not spring,
He felt he was so base a thing,
The Atotarho uttered " Go ! "
And looked at him so stern and high
That, shuddering from his searching eye,
The savage turned ; and when again,
In accents of more deep disdain,
The Atotarho his command
Spoke, sweeping out his pointing hand,
With a low cry of rage, yet mien
Weighed down by fear, he left the scene.

xv.

The Atotarho, with a look
Of deep and pitying kindness, took
The hand of the half shrinking maid,
With pleasure blushing, trembling now,
Longing to thank him, yet afraid
To lift her moist eyes to his brow,
Or speak lest glance or word betray
How deep within her heart his sway ;

Then left the river—passed the glade
And belt of wood—and trod the maize
By one of its four quartering ways
All steeped in dusk, until he made
The glimmering palisades—then straight
Both entered at the closing gate.

THE EXPEDITION.

XVI.

Along the Castle's gallery,
Over the verge of the rock outspread,
Whence the vision roamed far and free,
On passed Frontenac's hasty tread.
Back in golden and sapphire blaze
The river reflected the sunset rays ;
Beneath were the roofs of the warehouses, bright
In straggling and long-reaching pensiles of light,
Though dim were the streets, with forms dwarfed small
Creeping between the buildings tall ;
Down the vale of St. Charles shot a mellow beam,
But hid in the depths of its bed was the stream ;
Above it a pinion of hovering mist
By the soft yellow sun into splendor was kissed ;
Between, broad meadow and level grain
Smiled in the hour's enchanting reign ;
Whilst on the basin's lake-like breast
Was the long spread island in lustre dressed,
Dividing the flood that but parted to meet,
And sink like a vassal at Ocean's feet.

XVII.

It was a sweet and placid hour,
When purest feelings and thoughts had power,
And the stern old soldier felt his breast
Hushing itself into holy rest ;
But the cares of his rule again bore sway—
The angels flew from his heart away—
A figure approached him : “ Ha, Lavergne !
Welcome ! for thee is a duty stern !
Band thee together a hundred men !
Hasten and sweep every hill and glen
Where’er thou canst meet with the Iroquois foe,
And scourge them with bloody unsparing blow !
Take too this Kah-kah to be thy guide,
The Indian who joined us last even-tide ;
I think we may trust him ! Some wrongs, he said,
The proud Atotarho had heaped on his head.
Away, and when next thy face I see,
Thou knowest what tidings will gladden me ! ”

THE BIVOUC.

XVIII.

The moon in glorious beauty glowed ;
The heavens were one resplendent sheet,
And her white lustrous mantle flowed
Over the forests at her feet.

But only here and there a ray
Of silver pierced a sunken glen
O'erhung by trees, scarce light by day,
In which were hid a throng of men.
Coureurs de bois with hunting-shirt,
Blue-girdled Hurons of Lorette,
And pikemen in their buff-coats girt,
Were in this gloomy hollow met,
Armed with their different weapons all,
As if prepared for instant call.
A youth beneath a hemlock's height,
Stood with plumed hat, and cuirass bright,
With an old pikeman at his side,
Erect and grim in martial pride,
Each viewing the wild bivouac round ;
Some stretched at ease upon the ground ;
Some busy at their sylvan meal ;
Some causing fragrant wreaths to steal
Their hatchet-calumets from out ;
With others, chattering, grouped about.
At length he spoke : " No more delay,
La Croix ! this moon will guide our way !
We-an-dah (such our captive's name,
Doubtless a chief of power and fame,
So high his pride,) by morning's light
May by his tribe be missed, and thus
Lingering near Thurenserah, might
To my small force prove dangerous.
And Kah-kah ! he is gone, I hear.
The dog ! his treachery too I fear !

Haste, haste La Croix ! prepare the men !
This instant must we leave the glen."

THE ABDUCTION.

XIX.

The same broad moon—night's radiant queen !
Was smiling on a different scene.
The On-on-dah-gah maize-fields gleamed,
The river flashed, the woods were bright,
And the low rounded lodges seemed
Great silver helmets in the light ;
Great as those casques the forms of stone
Displayed—forms terrible, unknown !
Told by the sires with shuddering fright,
That came in their destroying might,
Till pitying Hah-wen-ne-yo cast
Destruction on their heads at last.

XX.

Within the slanting picket's shade,
Outside the gate, Jiskoko strayed
In all her sorrowing beauty's pride,
Her friend, O-tait-sah,* at her side ;
In silence both were bound ;—the one
Was dwelling on her being's sun,

* "The Blossom" in the On-on-dah-gah tongue.

Whose kind, kind looks and words, when last
By his her timid footstep passed,
Had deepened love within her heart,
Which only could with life depart ;
With Kah-kah rising like a cloud,
Ever that hour's sweet light to shroud ;
The other, in her sympathy,

Mute in her speech, but with quick view
Noting the distant stream—the tree

At hand—the maize—the moon—the dew—
And thinking with delight perchance,
Upon some future feast-day dance,
Or on some youth whose deeds had wove
Around her heart the net of love.

XXI.

The two alone disturbed the scene,
Sleeping beneath the dreamy sheen ;
The sunset breeze had sank to rest
Upon the forest's leafy breast ;
Whilst the field-cricket's silvery trill
Made the deep silence deeper still.

XXII.

But as they passed a thicket, dashed
An Indian out,—his hatchet flashed,—
O-tait-sah fell in blood ;—he caught,
Swooning Jiskoko,—then like thought
Rushed through the maize, and struck the woods,
And skimmed the moonlight solitudes

With a fleet foot that, as it sped,
New strength seemed drawing at each tread,
Till a short league had flown, and then
Entered a gloomy, shaggy glen,
Through a wild throng, unheeding, passed,
Who seemed in preparations fast
About to leave the shadowy dell ;
And, striding where a moonbeam fell
Upon a plumed and cuirassed youth,
“Kah-kah,” exclaimed, “would prove his truth !
See, Brave of Yon-non-de-yoh ! here”—

Down placing as his feet the maid
Who, now recovering, looked in fear
Bewildered round, while accents strayed
Hurried and broken from her lips,
Betokening the mind’s eclipse ;
“Is Thurenserah’s pulse of life !”
Then his fierce eye more venomous grew,
He hissed the words his clenched teeth through,
“Hooh ! Yon-non-de-yoh has a knife !

THE RESCUE AND DEATH.

XXIII.

Up Mountain Street’s steep winding track,
As evening’s mists began to curl,
Two of the guards of Frontenac
Went with a stag-like Indian girl.

Upon their left, in glimpses seen,
The low and straggling huts between,
The rock, where stood the castle, stooped
Sheer down, then sloped with thickets grouped.
The battery flanking it they passed,
Entered the Place d'Armes spreading vast,
Thence, through the opened sallyport,
And, crossing the broad castle court,
Said to the sentry at the door,
"Speech of the noble Governor!"

XXIV.

Within a room, the gallery next,
Where hung a cresset from its beam,
Sat Frontenac, his forehead vexed
With musing, in the ruddy gleam
That faded gradually away,
Till lost in nooks and places low,
Save where glanced back by antlers gray,
Or where a breastplate caught a glow.
Upon a map his eye was placed,
On which were lakes and rivers traced,
With Indian trails all o'er that wound,
And Indian castles scattered round,
Bearing the well-known names that showed
There made the Iroquois abode.

XXV.

He struck the floor—a guardsman came.
"Meux! tell the Count Lavergne I claim

His presence here in two hours' space !
And down once more he bent his face.

XXVI.

A rap !—the door at his command
Opened—the bending guards there stood,
The Indian girl erect, at hand.
“ Your errand speak !”

“ Within the wood
That stretches by St. Charles's flow,
Where he had gone to hunt the deer,
Kah-kah was found an hour ago
Dead, by the young Carignan Pierre.
Scarce had Pierre told to us the tale,
Meeting us by the water-side,
When o'er the basin, from a veil
Of shadow a canoe we spied.
This Indian girl alone it bore,
And near our post it found the shore ;
She Yon-non-de-yoh sought, she said,
And here direct we bent our tread !”
Frontenac waved his hand—“ Depart !”
Upon the girl then glanced his eye ;
Still reared erect, her Indian heart
Shown in her presence proud and high.
Her features wore a lighter hue
Than that her forest sisters knew,
But her full eye was dark and clear
As the orb'd splendors of the deer.

From her dark hair a feather sprung,
Behind, the usual roller hung ;
Whilst fell a light loose dress of skin
Down to her brodered moccasin.

XXVII.

“ What seek'st thou ? ”—the deep voice was kind,
And slight the girl her head inclined,
Answering in tones so soft and low
That Frontenac scarce heard their flow.
“ Jiskoko's voice is very sweet,
Like the bird's flight her gliding feet,
Her eye is like the star which ne'er
Moves from its lodge within the air :
But now that voice no more is heard
Where late each heart to joy it stirred ;
No more those light feet make the ground
Burst into laughing flowers around ;
The eye no more is sparkling bright,
'Tis filled with tears, and dark with night ;
Will not great Yon-non-de-yoh's ear
Jiskoko's sorrowing sister hear ?
So great a warrior will not keep
The fawn to tremble and to weep !
He will not let the Robin's trill
Be longer moan of whippoorwill !
No ! he'll restore the bird its tree,
He'll set the poor Jiskoko free ! ”
“ Never ! ” fierce shouted Frontenac,
Whilst his eye flashed, his brow grew black,

"Girl! daughter of a hated race!
How hast thou dared to seek this place!
How, bold one, how! art not afraid?
Thou seek'st thy sister! know'st not thou
That Thurenserah loves the maid?

The dog! who, could I clutch him now,
I'd tread beneath my feet, and make
His death-song echo at the stake!"
A wild light glanced his features o'er,
And sternly stamped he on the floor,
Whilst the girl's eye with sidewise lift
Glared with a furious fire, and swift
Glided her hand within her dress.
Downcast the eye, hand motionless
Again, as Frontenac his glance
Turned once more on her countenance:
"But yet I will not harm thee, girl!"
His eye grew soft, his features caught
A shade of pensive struggling thought:
"There's something that subdues the whirl
Of passion in me as I gaze,
Leading me back to former days!"
"Then Yon-non-de-yoh will set free
Jiskoko!" flashed the wild fire back
Into the face of Frontenac:
"Not till thy Atotarho's knee
Is bent, acknowledging my sway!"
Again the maiden's cowering eye
Shot its keen, furtive, sidewise ray
Like some fierce serpent's crawling nigh;

Again within, quick glanced her hand,
Then all once more was still and bland :
“ My Canada father then will let
 Jo-gwe-yoh on Jiskoko look ! ”
Frontenac’s eye the maiden’s met,
 The wrath his face once more forsook ;
His dirk a cuirass struck—with speed
 Entered a guard—with softened tone :
“ This maiden to Jiskoko lead,
 Let them remain an hour alone ! ”

XXVIII.

The guardsman through the gallery led,
 Until he reached and oped a door,
And when passed in the maiden’s tread,
 He locked and barred it as before.
Jiskoko on a couch was leaning,
Her long black hair her features screening ;
A single lamp with feeble light
Yielding the bleak bare walls to sight ;
But as the maid with noiseless tread
Approached, and soft “ Jiskoko ! ” said,
Up to her feet she instant sprung
With a wild cry upon her tongue ;
Amazement, deep amazement took
Possession of her staring look ;
Then joy in brightest flash shot o’er
Her face, and then a blush it bore,
A blush so deep, brow, neck, and breast
The rich and radiant tint confessed ;

She trembled, shrank, as half afraid,
When took her timid hand the maid ;
Her bosom heaved with quick delight,
Then down she dropped her sparkling sight,
With heart and soul all wrapped to hear
The low tones whispering in her ear :
“ Listen ! when Kah-kah’s hatchet fell ! ”

(Jiskoko here suppressed a cry.)

“ Thy friend, the Blossom, did not die
At once—she lived her tale to tell.
(By her poor sorrowing mother found,
At morn stretched bleeding on the ground.)
Ka-hais-kah* on a deer’s trail,—then
Saw thee with Yon-non-de-yoh’s men ;
With speedy foot and heart in flame,
Hither the Atotarho came
Garbed as thou see’st him, with a band
Of his best Braves to aid his hand.
He met the base dog Kah-kah,—low
He brought him with one hatchet-blow ;
But e’er black Hah-no-gah-ate-geh†
Bade the foul spirit to him flee,
The Atotarho made him tell
Where was the sorrowing Robin’s cell ;
And, now the Atotarho’s here,
Jiskoko will no longer fear ;
Ere Kah-qua‡ brings another day,

* Ka-hais-kah means “the Arrow” in On-on-dah-gah.

† The “ Evil Spirit ” in On-on-dah-gah.

‡ Kah-qua “ the Sun ” in On-on-dah-gah.

With Thurenserah, far away
Will fly the Robin, and again
Will On-on-dah-gah list her strain !”

XXIX.

Jiskoko listened,—every word
Delicious joy within her stirred ;
That he, the Atotarho, he
The worshipped of her every thought,
Should dare so much to set her free,
Perilling life ;—her heart was fraught
With deeper, tenderer love, imbued
With warmer, holier gratitude.
Ah, did he also love ! her eye
Was raised a moment to his face,
But glowing kindness, with a sigh,
She there could only, only trace ;
The same that always lit his brow,
But sweeter, stronger, livelier now !
Away with him—she did not ask
The means—she knew, fond maid, she knew
That Thurenserah told her true ;
He would perform his promised task,
And nerved to strength her drooping frame,
To act when time for action came.

XXX.

The warrior oped his dress, unwound
A deer-skin line of braided strength
Knotted to scores of feet in length,

Close swathed his slender form around ;
Then grasping it in folds, he drew
His knife, approached the massive door,
And stood ; the faint lamp fainter grew,
At last its flickering light gave o'er ;
A plaintive wind commenced to sweep,
The room was filled with darkness deep,
Save where the loopholes, pierced on high,
Let in some glimmerings of the sky.

XXXI.

At length they glared, and fell the bar,
Quick rattled in the lock the key,
Opened the door with sullen jar,
A gasp—a fall—and instantly
The Atotarho, with a stamp,
Extinguished the slain guardsman's lamp ;
Across the jutting gallery thence
Drew him with hurried violence ;
And, heaving with convulsive strength,
Lifted him o'er the rails at length,
Into the chasm,—one murky frown,—
Then pitched the body headlong down,
Lashed to the rails the line, and then
Rushed to Jiskoko's side again.
He took the maiden's hand : " Fear not !"
He said, then bore her from the spot.
" Now cling to me !" The maiden clung,
And soon upon the line they swung ;

The trembling girl gave one swift glance—
Round was a rainy black expanse ;
Above, dark outlines on the air
Told that the castle's moss was there ;
Near to the left, with shuddering awe
The battery's frowning line she saw,
The muzzles filled she knew with death,
And scarce she drew her very breath ;
By swept the wind with rushing sound,
 Dashing the rain upon their forms,
 In one of May's most furious storms.
Far swung they out, swift whirled they round ;
She closed her eyes again, her cling
Drawn closer with each whirl and swing ;
And yet, e'en yet, her sore affright
Yielding at times to wild delight,
Though blushing shame, that she, most blest,
Was clinging, clinging to his breast.
Down still, nought hearing but the wind ;
Still down, down through the darkness blind ;
At last they touched the lesser steep,
Where scarcely could Jiskoko keep
Her foothold, though her stumbling tread
Was by the Atotarho led,
And slowly worked their laboring way
Down the rough sloping rocks that lay
Toward the dim huts in straggling rank,
Between them and the river bank.
The shrieking, howling, sweeping blast,
The rain in dashes on it cast,
Keeping beneath each reeking roof

All from the miry street aloof.
Reaching the marge, the warrior drew
Out of the thickets a canoe,
And, placing quick within the maid,
The paddle seized ; but e'er the blade
The water struck, he glanced around,
His ear bent down—no sight, no sound,
But the slant rain, the dwellings grouped,
And blast like that a warrior whooped.
He stood an instant—muttered low,
“Should Thurenserah strike the blow
To Yon-non-de-yoh's heart, how high
Would rise the League's triumphant head !
How Hah-wen-ne-yo from his sky,
His glorious smiles would on us shed !
He'll go ! but yet”—he looked to where
The maiden sat—“she claims my care !
Still did not Yon-non-de-yoh boast,
That underneath his feet he'd tread
Me, Thurenserah ! me, a Brave !”
His knife here glittered in the wave.
“The Atotarho of the dread
And proud Ho-do-no-sonne host !
He'll go ! the Robin will not wait,
But seek the other side—she'll find
There well-known braves. Let Te-yo-ayt*
Bring the canoe again : the wind
Has ceased, its rush of fury o'er !”
He said and bounded from the shore.

* Light.

XXXII.

On midst the scattered roofs he went,
Lights, sparkling in the casements, lent
Quick gleamings to the rainy street,
But none were there to stay his feet.
Winged with fierce speed he shot along,
 Whilst a low cabin here and there
Gave forth some swinging hunter-song,
 With shout and laughter on the air.

XXXIII.

He clambered up the bushy steep,
With tug and scramble, pull and leap.
Until he reached the cliff he found
 The line still swinging in the blast ;
Around a rock its end he wound,
 Knotting the yielding texture fast,
And then with Indian skill and strength,
Commenced to climb its slender length.
He saw a black stripe drawn on air :
The battery's dreaded guns were there,
Which into death-winged lightning broke,
And with stern voice of thunder spoke ;
The wind but uttered feeble howl,
But still the heavens showed sable scowl,
And the rain beat. Up, up he went,
His steady eye above him bent,
Foothold receiving from the knots
Set on the line in bulging spots.
The castle blackened now the air,

But one bright spot was glittering there ;
It shone in that same room where he
Stood by his hated enemy,
And heard those threats that made his ire
Blaze into fierce though smothered fire.
Still up he went ; the gallery now
Broke forth, then level with his brow ;
Over the rails he leaped—his tread
Skimmed now the space beneath him spread ;
He glanced within the casement, there
Frontenac with his face of care
Over the map still bowed his frame ;
He struck the door, the bidding came ;
He entered. “ Ha ! again, sweet maid ! ”

Said Frontenac with rising glow.

The Indian crouched his figure low,
As doth the panther when arrayed
For his dread leap upon his prey.
“ Did not great Yon-non-de-yoh say
That he would underneath his feet

The Atotarho tread ? Hooh ! look !
I am the Atotarho ! ” Fleet

As a deer’s bound his leap he took
Full at the throat of Frontenac ;

But e’r the destined blow could fall,
A form, unseen before, with call
For help loud ringing, thrust him back,
And drew a sword, whilst to the hand
Of Frontenac found ready brand.

The Indian gave one cry of wrath
When thrust thus backward in his path ;

Then, with a face all flame that grew,
Leaped like a wild cat on the two,
With gnashing teeth and glaring eye,
And knife and hatchet flourished high ;
Frontenac's thrust he parried, stayed
The other's quick descending blade.
With furious violence for life,
Here—there—all round—now raged the strife ;
The Indian's form seemed plumed with wings,
So swift his rushings, high his springs ;
In flashes of quick light, his blows
He rained upon his pressing foes,
Till, in his blind haste, Frontenac
 Stumbled and headlong past him fell.

The savage gave one smothered yell,
And, as the other crossed his track,
Sank his keen hatchet in his head,
And toward the Yon-non-de-yoh sped ;
But wide an inner door now swung,
And in the room two guardsmen sprung.
The Atotarho wheeled and flew
Like light the outer portal through ;
Swift to the gallery's end he went,
And down the line commenced descent,
His knife between his teeth, and slung

 His tomahawk upon his arm ;
But as in middle air he swung,

 The castle bell rang out alarm.
Stern clanged the tones along the air ;
 Down past him dropped a torch's light
Tossed from the gallery ; quick a glare

Burst from the battery on his sight,
Smiting into a splendor keen
All the stern features of the scene :
Instant a ball above him screeched—
 Echoed a deep and stunning roar ;
 Still down, still down he gliding bore,
 But now the line was severed o'er,
And with slight shock the slope he reached.

XXXIV.

Out still the bell's stern clangor rung,
As down the slope himself he flung ;
Before, amidst the scattered way
Of roofs through which his pathway lay,
He heard loud calls, and saw the glow
Of torches passing to and fro.
He paused—long, deep, full breaths he drew,
His knife and hatchet grasped anew ;
Then, like an eagle in its wrath,
He dashed along his forward path.
Hurrying and bustling forms were there,
Scores of red torches fired the air,
Gleaming on halberd, gun and knife,
Hastily snatched for unknown strife ;
The coureur wild, the keen-eyed scout,
 Hunter, batteaman, trader, all
 The dwellers of the suburb, call
On one another, peer about,
Wondering what enemy so bold
The castle's tongue of iron told
Within their strong and guarded hold.

XXXV.

Near and more near, with flying frame,
The fierce and desperate Indian came ;
Near and more near, each sinew strung,
Each thought on fire, still, still he sprung,
And now within the space he rushed
Where bright the flaring torches blushed ;
Shouts rang out boldly on the night,
And gathered all to bar his flight.
Swinging his weapon right and left,
 On, on, the Atotarho dashed.
Amidst the crowd his path he cleft,
 Forms dropped, cries pealed, and weapons clashed.
On, on, the Atotarho on,
 Right, left, his weapons swinging yet,
 And, ere a blow his form had met,
His pathway through the throng was won.
On, on the Atotarho still
 There was his bark, a figure light,
With vigorous and determined will,
 Grasping the margin bushes tight,
The buoyant basswood shape to keep
Steady for the approaching leap.
With one keen whoop the leap he takes,
The slight kah-we-yah rocks and shakes ;
He grasps the paddles—from his bow
 Swifter his arrow never flew,
Than o'er the Cataraqui's flow
 Shot Thurenserah's winged canoe.

But quick a rifle rang—with cry
Jiskoko dropped—a gasp a sigh.
Poor loving maid ! poor loving maid !
His mandate she had not obeyed,
But with an anxious heart had staid
The watch herself for him to keep,
Poor loving maid ! to look and weep,
Alive to every sound and sight,
Hearing the tumult with affright ;
And Thurenserah, as the bark
Turned round Cape Diamond's profile dark,
Projecting boldly from the beach,
Where not a shot the place could reach,
Beheld, as down he bent his head,
 By the faint radiance of the stars
 From the rent storm's swift floating bars,
But the locked features of the dead.

END OF CANTO FOURTH.

CANTO FIFTH.

THE INN OF THE
CANOE.
WE-AN-DAH.

THE SUMMONS.
THE ENCAMPMENT.
THE MARCH.



CANTO FIFTH.

THE INN OF THE CANOE.

I.

AT the rude suburb's western end
A little inn of logs was set,
Where oft, a social hour to spend,
Batteaumen, hunters, coureurs met.
Above the porch, in rough daubed hue,
Outside was painted a canoe ;
Within, a table stretched mid floor,
With benches ranged at either side ;
Whilst shelves, in one paled corner, bore
Flagons in glittering tints that vied.
The carcass of a slaughtered deer
Carelessly at one side was flung ;
A bow, a pouch, a fishing-spear
And Indian paddle, round were hung.
As afternoon its shadows wrought,
The customed throng the tavern sought ;
The coureur rude, his coarse blue check
Spread from his bare and sunburnt neck ;
The hunter in his green-fringed skirt,
To match the forest leaves in hue ;

And the batteauaman in his shirt
Of red, and tasselled cap of blue.
Glasses were in each hand, whilst rung
In loud confusion every tongue.

II.

“Ho, Bœuff!” a coureur said, “how now?
Why dost thou show so grave a brow?
A moon ago I saw thee track
The Huron Islands—thy canoe
Heaped up with blankets, and thy crew
So jovial! Did the Hurons back
Without a barter turn thee?”

“No!

But when their usual haunt I gained,
The Bell-rock, empty huts to show
Where they had been alone remained.
At last, as close we searched about,
We found an aged sire; he said,
Whilst shook his aged frame with dread,
That the fierce Iroquois were out
Upon the war-path, and were near,
And off his tribe had fled in fear.
He told us then to strike the rock,
And, short time after, to its sound,
Sending o’er isle and wave its swell,
We saw the frightened warriors flock
From all the neighboring coverts round,
Their safety-sign that rocky bell.
To quiet then their fears we tried,

But from their hearts had vanished pride :

And finding talk of barter vain,

We with our load turned back again !”

“ And others,” a batteaman said,

“ Can of the Iroquois own dread !

Late at the setting of the sun,

 Within the Thousand Islands Lake,

Our crew had landed upon one,

 Our fires to light and suppers take ;

But e’er we ’d struck a flint in brush,

I chanced to look between a bush,

And there I saw a great canoe

Filled with the fiends swift paddling through.

With Thurenserah casting look,

 The curst young Atotarho ! round ;

Close our batteau was in a nook,

 But never gave we sight or sound,

And the whole band passed through the same,

In wisdom as the demons came !”

“ How strange that Bell-rock. Oft I ’ve heard”—

Thus thrust another in his word :

“ The Hurons say, a towering form

 Is seen beside, it stand to take,

Foretelling, though the winds are warm,

And skies are blue, that some fierce storm

 Upon the scene is soon to break ;

And then he wakes a sound so clear

And loud, it pierces every ear ;

 Warning his children on the wave

To hasten homeward, ere the blast

Upon their lingering barks is cast,
Too quick and fierce for skill to save.
But I have, comrades ! heard its tone
When up the thunderstorm was coming,
And paddling near, have seen some crone
Or sire upon it loudly drumming :
And, for that matter, I its sound
Have heard when not a cloud I found,
And when, for days succeeding, nought
Of storm the soft bright weather brought !”
Exclaimed a hunter, “ As I went
Basquet ! along St. Charles’s side
This morn, I saw thy rifle bent
To shoulder.”

“ A huge panther died
Beneath my aim, whose whine all night
Plunged me, the beast ! in sleepless plight.
Fiends are these Indians to the core !”
Spoke the batteauman giving o’er
A draught, and deeply breathing—“ Hush !
We-an-dah there is lying !”—

“ Tush

For him, the drunken wretch ! so low
He ’s fall’n, he ’s man no longer ! ho !
Here ’s drink for thee, We-an-dah ! sleep
No more !” With swiftest, eagerest leap,
An Indian left a nook, and flew
To where the glass was held to view.
Quickly the rosy stream he quaffed,
Then with delirious pleasure laughed.

“ Good, good, fire-water ’s good ! ”—his clutch
Another cup held toward him gained,
And then a third one wild he drained—
“ We-an-dah loves the Pale-face much ! ”
Then staggering back, his knife he drew,
And in a dance his limbs he threw,
Whilst the rough concourse round him stood
And mocked him in their reckless mood ;
“ See ! ha ! ha ! see him as he bounds !
And hark ! his war-whoop now he sounds !
Ha ! ha ! ha ! mark him reel ! look, Flee !
Look, Vaux ! a great Brave have we here !
A valiant warrior ! hear him shout,
‘ More, more fire water ! ’ Give it out,
Good landlord ! fill it to the brim.

It vanishes at his lips as fast
As rain-drops on the water cast,
Ah ! that has proved too much for him ! ”
And headlong on the floor he fell
Stretched out, relaxed, insensible ;
And as beneath their feet he lay,
They spurned him to a nook away.
Ah, forest Chieftain ! noble Brave !

Wert thou, indeed, so mean a thing !
Better have filled a warrior’s grave,
Thou Eagle with a broken wing !

III.

Now, round the table, each one held
A goblet, whilst a coureur swelled

His rough, free song, all joining in
The chorus with tumultuous din.

“ Over the waters now we dash,
Ever sing merrily, boys, sing merrily !
Ripples around our paddles flash,
Onward so merrily, thus go we !
Round let the bowl fly,
Quaff, boys, quaff !
Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !
Laugh, boys, laugh ! ”

A hunter then took up the strain,
And pealed it till all rang again.

“ Through the thick forests now we tread,
Ever sing merrily, boys, sing merrily !
Crack goes the rifle ! the game falls dead,
Onward then merrily, thus go we !
Round let the bowl fly,
Quaff, boys, quaff !
Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !
Laugh, boys, laugh ! ”

Then a batteauaman passed the song,
Rolling a volume full along.

“ Up, up the waters pole we now,
Ever sing merrily, boys, sing merrily !
Tramp, tramp, tramp on each side of our prow,
Onward so merrily, thus go we !

Round let the bowl fly,
Quaff, boys, quaff!
Ha! ha! ha! ha!
Laugh, boys, laugh!"

And then all joined their tones so deep,
The very glasses seemed to leap.

" Thus with our paddle, our rifle, and pole,
Ever sing merrily, boys, sing merrily
We go through life, with the grave for our goal,
Onward so merrily, thus go we!
Round let the bowl fly,
Quaff, boys, quaff!
Ha! ha! ha! ha!
Laugh, boys, laugh!"

WE-AN-DAH.

IV.

Frontenac, in his usual room,
Sat with a brow of deepened gloom :
June's sunshine lay upon the floor,
Through the oped casement came the breeze,
And the broad transverse gallery o'er
He saw the distant tops of trees.
A dark ancestral portrait glowed

As, searching out each hidden dye,
The sunlight o'er the surface flowed,
And woke to life brow, cheek, and eye.
Beside a table where he sat,
A wolf-hound crouched upon a mat,
Whilst parchments, maps, and volumes lay
Around in negligent array.

v.

At length he rose, his threshold passed,
And on the gallery stood, where vast
The prospect opened to his view,
Steeped in the sunshine's golden hue.
Beneath him was the chasm of air
Where the cliff fell; thence sloped the steep,
Rocky and grouped with thickets, where
Browsed the quick goats with many a leap.
The lower city's chimneys rose
Along the marge in long array,
Whilst, in its calm and smooth repose,
Like air the broad curved river lay.
A brigantine was creeping round,
With its one sail, Cape Diamond's bound;
By Orleans' Island a batteau
Was, like a lazy spider, slow
Crawling—the boatmen, spots of red,
Pushing their poles of glimmering thread,
Whilst field, roof, forest filled his gaze,
Till vanishing in the soft gray haze.

VI.

But nought was there to charm his eye,
His mind gave darkness to the sky ;
A brooding shade was o'er the scene,
So glorious in its summer mien.
Again his gloomy room he sought.
His brow o'erspread with drearier thought :—
“ Poor, poor Lavergne ! poor youth ! that he
Should die, brave boy ! defending me !
And by that bloody demon too !
That Thurenserah ! ”—Deeper hue
Fell on his visage like a pall.
“ The sire, and now the son, to fall
Beneath the tomahawk ! ”—Again
That dark deed of the distant past
Was on his shuddering memory cast !
Lavergne's dead form—his harrowing pain—
His loneliness—the evening gloom
Darkening within this self-same room—
The lost Lucille—that radiant child !
And she, the young, the perished mother,
Loved with such depth of passion wild,
Slain, slain, and, heaven ! by her own brother,
And he an Iroquois ! That trick
Of Thurenserah's too ! Thus mocked !
Cheated ! Jiskoko's cell unlocked
Before his very eyes, and he
Attacked by his fierce enemy
In his own room.—“ Without there, ho ! ”

A guard obeyed. "Ta-wen-deh, quick!"—
The usual strides went to and fro
Until the Huron runner came.
"Ta-wen-deh!"—with an eye of flame—
"Thy foot be now the eagle's wing!
Take the war-wampum! my command
Bear, that the hatchet through the land
Unburied be against my foe,
The Iroquois! This arm shall bring
At last these haughty nations low!"
Ta-wen-deh vanished, and once more
His tread he to the gallery bore.

VII.

At length in Mountain Street he spied
We-an-dah, with his sauntering stride.
Across him seemed to flash a thought;
His room regained he. "Ho, Allaire!"
Again the guardsman entered there.
"Haste! let We-an-dah here be brought!"

VIII.

The Indian came—his flushed swoll'n face
Of deep debauch showed wildest trace.
His scalp-lock down neglected hung;
Round him a blanket soiled was flung;
His once rich leggings now were torn;
His moccasins to tatters worn;
Ah, forest Chieftain! noble Brave!
Wert thou, indeed, so mean a thing!

Better have filled a warrior's grave,
Thou Eagle with a broken wing !

IX.

'Twas but one fleeting week ago
That, capturing him in chase, Lavergne
To Frontenac the Chief had brought,
Soaring in soul, unbowed in thought,
Reared before Yon-non-de-yoh stern
And fierce, a foe, a fearless foe !
Taunting him as a Brave should taunt,
A Brave whom danger ne'er could daunt.
Yea ! hurling scorn, as if he stood
Within his native forest, free,
Frontenac captive at his side,
Showing, through all, such glorious pride,
That Thurenserah's self, had he
Been in his place, had not defied
With sterner, higher, haughtier mood
Or loftier wrath, his enemy.

X.

That very night, as with his wound
Lavergne's sword gave him in the fray,
Fainting within his cell he lay,
The guardsman, as his hurt he bound,
Offered, alas ! the fatal draught,
Which for the first time now he quaffed.
As the fell fire within him ran,

He sank at once to less than man ;
He chattered in delirious glee
Amidst his feverish agony ;
And, as the first delicious glow
He felt, first poison of the foe !
He thought the white man, that could make
Such draught as this, his thirst to slake,
Had greater power and skill to lift
 The soul on soaring wing, than even
 Great Hah-wen-ne-yo, who had given
Only his tame and tasteless gift.
Hour after hour he drank the flame ;
More strong the horrid thirst became ;
More eager did he grasp the bowl ;
Deeper and deeper sank his soul ;
Whilst Frontenac, with scornful smile,
 Marking by what a weapon he
 Could strike down his red enemy,
One of the hated race, in guile
Hour after hour the stream supplied,
Then for a time withheld the tide,
Until the Brave ! the warrior proud !
The strong-winged Eagle of the cloud !
An On-on-dah-gah !—he that late
Dared Yon-non-de-yoh in his state,
And would have strode to fiery death
With the stern war-song on his breath,
He, he ; oh, shame ! oh, shame ! subdued !
Slave-like ! scourged hound-like ! lowly sued
At the contemptuous guardsman's foot,]
 That Yon-non-de-yoh still should give

The stream by which he ceased to live,
Save as an abject, grovelling brute,
Till Frontenac, in deep disdain,
Yielded the devilish draught again,
And, in pure scorn then made him free
To roam Quebec at liberty,
The mark—the sneer—the jest of all—
How could an Iroquois so fall!
Ah, forest Chieftain! noble Brave!

Wert thou, indeed, so mean a thing!
Better have filled a warrior's grave,
Thou Eagle with a broken wing!

XI.

But now before stern Frontenac,
The Chief seemed struggling sore to call
Some of his ancient spirit back;
He strove to lift his figure tall
To its full height, and make his mien
Show the proud warrior he had been;
But ah, in vain, in vain, his eye,
From Frontenac's now lenient gaze,
When he would seek its glance to raise,
Cowering and dim, away would fly,
And there he stood, an humbled slave,
Not a Ho-de-no-sonne Brave.

XII.

“We-an-dah!” Up the Chieftain rolled
His eye at the commanding tone,

“ A sweeping cloud of midnight fold
Within thy people's sky has grown
And Yon-non-de-yoh's ; in the trail
Between us, sharp thick briers prevail,
And soon will Yon-non-de-yoh's tread
Be on the war-path stern and dread ;
But thou ! thou art my brother, Brave !
We 've buried in one common grave
The hatchet, trodden it down deep,
And still between us will we keep
The chain of friendship ! thou wilt go,
My friend and guide against my foe ! ”

XIII.

“ Hoo ! ” and the warrior reared his frame
Proudly, whilst flashed his eye with flame,
“ Hoo ! ” and he flung his arm on high,
As if he 'd soar up to the sky,
“ Does Yon-non-de-yoh ”—and his look
Was lofty and sublime, as down
On Frontenac it wildly flashed,
Then changed it to a mighty frown,
His lip with rage impetuous shook,
And on the floor his foot he dashed—
“ Think that We-an-dah is a dog ! ”
He clutched his knife with fury, “ Rather ”—
Grated his teeth,—“ my Canada father
“ Back to his cell the Brave shall flog,
Than he will lift the hatchet red
Against his tribe or League ! ” And dread

Rang his shrill whoop, so loudly pealed,
It seemed all objects round him reeled.

XIV.

Frontenac started as at first
This fierce defiance on him burst,
Then, smiling in derision grim,
Signed to Allaire close by, who took
A cup and flagon from a nook,
And filled the goblet to the brim ;
The Indian threw one eager glance
On it, in proud restraint then turned,
And with majestic aspect stood ;
Then viewing it again askance,
He clutched it, whilst his features burned,
And drank it as a wolf does blood.
Another draught then down he flung,
And then another, still another,
Then reeling up, with stammering tongue,
Said, " Yes! We-an-dah is the brother
Of Yon-non-de-yoh ! whitemen all
His brothers are ! the Brave feels tall !
His heart feels big ! fire-water 's good !
It fills his veins with leaping blood !
He 'll go where Yon-non-de-yoh goes !
His foes shall be We-an-dah's foes !
Whoop ! whoop ! fire-water 's good ! more, more !"
And down he pitched upon the floor.
Ah, forest Chieftain ! noble Brave !
Wert thou, indeed, so mean a thing !

Better have filled a warrior's grave,
Thou Eagle with a broken wing!

THE SUMMONS.

XV.

Ho ! ho ! to the war-path ! with high lifted head,
The Huron unburied the tomahawk red ;
The bowed Adirondack looked up with the knife
Gleaming keen in his hand for the pitiless strife ;
The Ottawa's wild war-paint glowed fresh on his cheek,
As he came the fierce hatred of ages to wreak ;
The rough hardy boatmen left river and lake ;
The trapper the beaver ; the woodman the brake ;
The noble clasped cuirass of steel on his breast,
For the glory that gave to existence its zest ;
The artizan closed his dim workshop, and took
His arquebuse rusting for years in its nook ;
The soldier, who followed on Hungary's plain
Carignan's spread flag, grasped his musket again ;
The husbandman, singing gay Normandy's songs
Amongst Canada's grain-fields, rose too with the throngs ;
The axe midst the stumps of the clearing was flung ;
No longer the hunter's sharp rifle-crack rung ;
The village was empty ; deserted the glade ;
All came where the banner of France was displayed ;
Ho, ho, to the war-path ! stern Frontenac's tread
Is to dash to the earth the leagued enemy's head.

THE ENCAMPMENT.

XVI.

The summer sun was sinking bright
Behind the woods of Isle Perrot ;
Back Lake St. Louis gleamed the light
In rich and mingled glow ;
The slanting radiance at Lachine
Shone on an animated scene.
Beside the beach upon the swell
Scores of canoes were lightly dancing,
With many a long batteau, where fell
The sun, on pole and drag-rope glancing.
Throngs were upon the gravelly beach
Bustling with haste, and loud in speech ;
Some were placing in rocky batteaux
Cannon and mortars and piles of grenades ;
Some were refitting their arrows and bows,
Others were scanning their muskets and blades ;
Some were kindling their bivouac fire ;
Others were blending
Their voices in song ;
Whilst others, contending
With utterance strong,
Scarce kept from blows in their wreckless ire.

XVII.

Scabbard touched hatchet, and scalp-lock plume ;
Wheeling platoons here and there forced room ;

The Indian with girdle and knife was here ;
There was the buff-coated musketeer ;
The pikeman's steel breastplate here flashed in the sun,
By the swarthy Canadian's rude halberd and gun ;
The noble's gay mantle and sabre passed there,
By the hunter's rough deerskin and long shaggy hair ;
Coureurs de bois and batteaumen, made gay
By their sashes and caps, swell'd the mingled array ;
Whilst guttural accents and laughter loud,
Mixed with the tones of stern command ;
Loudly arose upon every hand
From the quick, busy, and eager crowd.

XVIII.

O'er a fur trader's cabin, spread broadly on high,
France's white standard saluted the eye ;
Beneath were the griffins of Frontenac gleaming
In gold, on the breast of a pennon outstreaming.
Before the threshold the sentries went,
Two of the guardsmen grim and tall ;
There were the steps of the leaders bent,
In and out of the audience-hall.

XIX.

The sunset tints from the lake withdrew,
And now on the broad expanse were seen
Here, rough Ottawa's tawny hue,
There Cataraqui's splendid green.
Onward flowing, disdaining to mingle,
Either color distinct and single ;

And not till league on league were passed,
Did the hues, so separate, blend at last.

XX.

As the twilight darkened round,
Flame on flame existence found ;
Stir and bustle ceased, and all
Welcomed night's slow gathering pall.

XXI.

Circling a fire up merrily streaming,
A group of pikemen and musketeers
Sat with their corslets and weapons gleaming
Red in the light.

“ 'Tis a sight that cheers
My bosom, to see this warlike host
Cooped so long in one dreary post ! ”
Said old Allaire.

“ Yes ! well sayest thou,
Answered La Croix. “ I've vowed a vow
To holy St. Ursula, that this pike
Shall ten of the whooping demons strike ! ”
“ Ten, sayest thou ! should there be but one,
And he Thurenserah, thy prowess were done ! ”
“ What know'st thou of my prowess ! ”

“ Nought.

But if thou the Iroquois often hadst met,
Less wouldst thou boast ! De Nonville sought
Our Seneca foemen ! I cannot forget
The combat we waged mid the thickets and trees,

With our creeping and serpent-like enemies.
Their bullets pattered like hail about ;
And then their hideous battle shout,
It cleaves the brain like a fiery dart :
In many a battle I 've borne a part,
I 've followed Turenne and great Condé, but ne'er
Strove I before with empty air,
And death all about me ! ”

“ Allaire was in fear,
Methinks ! ” said the pikeman, around with a sneer.
“ In fear ! base hound ! ”

“ Nay, nay ! ” outbroke
The others, “ La Croix was but in joke !
Men should not act like thoughtless boys ;
Sing us, Allaire, the soldier's joys ! ”

XXII.

Allaire had started to his feet,
Clenching his hand, whilst the other stood
Smiling, yet holding his arm, as though
To intercept a threatened blow ;
But quickly calmed the old guardsman's blood,
And again on the grass he took his seat ;
And, clearing his voice with an effort, sang
In tones that aloud o'er the bivouac rang.

1.

“ Banners all around us flying !
Trumpets all around us ringing !

Weapons gleaming ! chargers springing !
Comrades ! who 's afraid of dying !
Forward march ! quick on we go,
Gladly, freely, breast to foe ;
Forward, forward, on we go,
Such the joys we soldiers know.
Honor bright to fleeting breath,
Give us victory or death ;
With our bosoms to the foe,
Such the joys we soldiers know !

2.

“ When is past the conflict gory,
And our veins have ceased their leaping,
Then the watch-fire redly heaping,
Round fly merry song and story ;
Frowning care behind we throw
As our gleaming glasses glow ;
Backward march we bid it go !
Such the joys we soldiers know !
Ever ready for the field,
Ever ready life to yield ;
Onward, onward, breast to foe,
Such the joys we soldiers know !”

XXIII.

In the room of a lonely roof that stood
Beside the rapid and sounding flood,
Around a board with glasses set,
A joyous company were met ;
The noble leaders of the array

Speeding a few bright hours away.
Here sat De Gras and Vandreuil ; there
Callières and Bekancourt mocking at care.
Sparkling jest and witty gleam
Shot o'er the winecup's ruddy stream ;
And story, debate, and legend old,
With frequent song time onward rolled.
Hark ! a voice sounds merrily ;
'Tis Bekancourt singing in light-hearted glee.

1.

" Lovely France ! my native France !
At thy name my bosom bounds !
To my eye sweet visions dance !
In my ear soft music sounds !
Hail ! thy purple vineyards flowing !
Hail ! thy bright-eyed daughters glowing !
Of my life thou seem'st a part,
Lovely France ! Ah, la belle France,
Glorious France, how dear thou art !

2.

" Lovely France ! my native France !
Famous are thy battle-fields ;
And where points thy glittering lance,
Victory there her trophy yields.
Hail ! thy high historic story !
Hail ! thy legends rife with glory !
Shrine, where bends my willing heart !
Lovely France ! ah, la belle France !
Glorious France ! how dear thou art !"

XXIV.

As sinks the voice upon the applauding throng,
The young De Gras takes up the thread of song.

1.

“What thought makes my heart with most tenderness swell?
’Tis the thought of thy beauty, my sweet Gabrielle!
To the soft wind of summer swings lightly the tree,
But the glide of thy step is far lighter to me.

2.

“Oh! the sunshine around thee sheds richer its glow,
And the breeze sighs more blandly when kissing thy brow;
The nightingale chaunts her melodious glee,
But the sound of thy voice is far sweeter to me.

3.

“Thou hast circled thy chain—thou hast woven thy spell
For aye round this bosom, my own Gabrielle!
The star of the evening is brilliant to see,
But the glance of thy eye is far brighter to me.

4.

“In life, my loved angel, when struggling in death,
Thy dear name will dwell on my last ebbing breath.
Heaven’s bliss would be clouded and dark without thee,
The step, voice and eye, that make heaven to me.”

THE MARCH.

XXV.

Day after day, on Catarqui's breast,
The embattled host their upward pathway pressed.
All the noblest of the land
Mingled in that warlike band;
Gallant men, whose blood had poured
Where'er France had drawn the sword.

XXVI.

In the bright midst was the gray-haired Frontenac,
His fiery soul in arms for the attack.
Long had he burned his vengeful hate to shower
On the wild foes so scornful of his power;
To crush and overwhelm them in one general doom
Of blood and flame, and now the hour was come.

XXVII.

On the flotilla passed—sword, pike, and gun
Traced on the wave, and glittering in the sun.

XXVIII.

Now by green islands, where the feeding deer
Looked, and was gone ere arquebuse could bear;
Now by still coves, upon whose mirrors clear
The glossy duck seemed gliding through the air;
Now o'er some lake, whose broad expanded breast,
As came the breeze, to white-capped waves was driven,

And on whose distant flood appeared to rest
The hazy softness of the summer heaven ;
Athwart the mouth of some fierce river, now
Hurling its tumbling foaming tribute in,
And marking with its stain its conqueror's brow,
Beheld for hours before the spot they win.
Merrily now some basin o'er,
Borne with paddle and oar quick dashing :
Turning now to the tangled shore,
Where the cataract down came crashing ;
And whilst a part, with weary struggling care,
Across the portage wild the burthens bear,
The rest, waist-deep, midst whirling foam, drag slow,
Thus lightened of their loads, canoe and huge batteau.

XXIX.

Now by smooth banks where, stretched beneath the shade,
The Indian hunter gazed with curious eye ;
Now catching glimpses of some grassy glade,
Rich with the sunshine of the open sky ;
Now by the vista of some creek, where stood
The moose mid-leg, and tossing high his crown
Hazy with gnats, and vanishing in the wood,
Waking to showers of white the shallows brown.
Thus on they passed by day—at night they made
Their bivouac-fires amidst the forest shade,
Scaring the wolf and panther, till the reign
Of morning bade them launch upon the flood again.

END OF CANTO FIFTH.

CANTO SIXTH.

THE WAR-HATCHET.
THE WILDERNESS.
THE CATARACT.
THE SENECA.
A-GA-YEN-TEH.
CAYUGA LAKE.
THE CAYUGAS.

THE ONEIDAS.
THE STRAWBERRY
DANCE.
THE CANOE VOYAGE.
THE MOHAWK'S SCALP
DANCE.



CANTO SIXTH.

THE WAR-HATCHET.

I.

UPON a gorgeous woodland scene,
Whose limits mocked the eagle's sight,
A billowy sea of differing green,
The sun looked downward from its height.
Along an Indian trail, that traced
Its deep seam through these forests vast,
A narrow furrow, midst the waste,
Swiftly the Atotarho passed.
The war-paint's black and crimson streaks
Gleamed fiercely on his brow and cheeks ;
Upon his usual robe were spread
His battle deeds in tints of red ;
Hatchet, fusee, and knife he wore,
His shaven head the war-tuft bore ;
Whilst a roused spirit, fierce yet high,
Sat, like couched flame, within his eye.

II.

With a red girdle round his frame,
Behind the Hah-yah-do-yah came.

Nodded a crimsoned eagle plume
Over a brow of crimsoned gloom ;
No weapon bore he, save on high
A hatchet of vermilion dye.

THE WILDERNESS.

III.

Innumerable vistas far
Extended, myriad trunks between,
Eye-tangling and irregular,
Till closed by hillock or ravine.
Trees, trees, a verdant world, were round,
Straight, crooked, slant, each seeking light ;
With some all splintered, bare, and white,
Telling the lightning's blasting bound.
And now and then was seen a path
Of prostrate trunks in chaos cast,
With upturned roots, dark circles vast,
Signs of the fierce tornado's wrath.

IV.

Pines met the eye, all tasselled o'er ;
Hemlocks that fringy cones upbore ;
Oaks with their scalloped verdure ; beeches
Whose moss the northward pathway teaches ;
Poplars, light-hued and sensitive,

To every air-breath all alive ;
Maples, their red-stemmed foliage flickering
To downiest winds like streamlets bickering ;
Striped dog-woods, birches sweet, that stood
The incense bearers of the wood ;
Grim lurching firs and laurels green,
Showing the swamp's wet, clustered scene.

V.

Through this gigantic roof, the light
Here, made some natural opening bright ;
Here, down a narrow vista swept ;
Here underneath dense thickets crept ;
Here, broken, struggling being found,
Sprinkled like fire-flies on the ground.
But scarce these colors few the sway
Broke of the general hue of gray,
That filled, subdued and soft, the air,
Making a solemn twilight there.

VI.

This glorious sylvan scene showed rife
Each stage of vegetable life.
The downy sprout, the ground-bird trod
Elastic to the downy sod ;
The sappling with faint verdure crowned,
Low bending to the squirrel's bound ;
The tree, that, towering strong and high
Spread its green standard to the sky ;

Then, the dead top with lichens dressed ;
Then, the dark hollow in the breast ;
At last the dead prone log, with moss
Flung like a shroud, its form across.

VII.

As by the Indians passed, its lay
The robin ceased and shot away ;
Off, like a flash, the red-bird flew ;
Its gambol scared, the rabbit threw ;
The crackling of the under-brush
Told of the deer's retreating rush ;
With heavy wing, and croaking hoarse,
The crow urged o'er the woods its course ;
Whilst now and then the eagle gray
Pointed his beak and soared away.

VIII.

O'er some green glade now went their tread,
Spotted with strawberries pouting red ;
Now by a fountain clear as dew
Trickling its mossy channel through ;
Now in a broad and sweeping aisle ;
Now in a deep and dark defile ;
And now across the jagged bridge
Of some tree fall'n from ridge to ridge,
Forming between the hollow black,
Where crept the sedgy streamlet's track.

THE CATARACT.

IX.

A steady sound, whose rumble deep
Had long been mingling with the air,
More loud and stern commenced to sweep,
Till on the ear it seemed to bear
A mighty load ; the woods it filled
With its grand volume of stern sound ;
Nature's most secret heart seemed thrilled,
And every other tone was drowned.
To the light wind the branches shook,
Down sparkled on its way the brook,
Flew in and out each merry bird,
But not a sigh, dash, chip, was heard.

X.

Over the trees a form of snow
Was towering, by the sunny glow
Kissed into flashing diamonds ; bright
That silvery shape of glancing light,
Seeming as changing, quivering, there,
Some hovering spirit of the air.

XI.

Well, well the Atotarho knew
That shape, thus glittering to his view ;
Oft had he stood and on it gazed,
As in its noontide pomp it blazed ;

And when the moonlight o'er it threw
Its delicate robe of silvery hue ;
In contrast sweet and bright, to where
 The crashing, flashing, plunging form
 Of floods rush'd down in fearful storm,
One mighty curve upon the air.
The first seemed telling him to rise,
Until his fame should reach the skies ;
The last in thunder seemed to say,
Kneel, Atotarho ! kneel and pray !
Forget thy deeds, and with low brow,
Think of the Hah-wen-ne-yo now !

XII.

'Twas O-ni-ah-ga-rah there that hurled
 Its awful grandeur down its rock ;
Dim sign of that dread shape a world
 Reeling, shall see, when with fierce shock
He'll plant His tread on sea and shore,
And swear that Time shall be no more.
Farther my harp is mute to tell
Of the Sublime—the Terrible.

THE SENECA.

XIII.

The westering sun shot slanting beam
Along a narrow winding stream,
Bathing the basswoods of the bank,
 Bending in interlacing fold,

Whose rich and pendent clusters drank
The light, till seemed they wrought of gold.

XIV.

An Indian castle clustered by,
Girdled with palisadoes high.
Within a grassy space that lay
Next to the forest, an array
Of warriors in a circle sat,
Each crouched upon his bear-skin mat.
Solemnly passed the wreathing pipe
Adorned with many a blazoned type ;
Whilst each fixed eye and rigid face
Of deep abstracted thought bore trace.

A-GA-YEN-TEH.*

XV.

At length a warrior rose, his breast
Bearing a snake, tattooed, its crest
And forked tongue ready—with a brow
Where care had driven its furrowing plough,
And with a keen heart-searching eye
That flew around, each point to spy,
As if some danger near to find
Lurking beside him or behind.

* Meaning "To strike," in Seneca.

XVI.

'Twas A-ga-yen-teh, chieftain famed !
Who, midst the League's stern warriors, claimed
To Thurenserah next, the meed
Of honor and authority
By the fierce Nations yielded free
To wisdom and to valorous deed.

XVII.

Yet though in council eloquent
And wise, and on the war-path brave,
To venom'd envy's thralldom bent
Dark A-ga-yen-teh, veriest slave ;
And hatred fierce with envy came,
Kindling his breast with blended flame.
'Twas 'Thurenserah's fame that fraught
With venom foul his every thought ;
His power and sway within his heart
Rankled in sleepless, ceaseless ire,
But yet, so matchless was his art,
He veiled from all the fiendish fire.
Oft in the Union Feast would sneer
Or gesture of disdain appear
When 'Thurenserah met his eye ;
But with such quickness passed they by
That scarcely could the sight descry.
He seemed a shadowy scorn to throw
Upon the Atotarho's state
By quick grimace—eye's sidewise glow,

Or tone's slight sarcasm—yet his hate
Was ne'er displayed in open word ;
And all these signs so slightly stirred
The mind, none heeded at the time ;
And still, so lurking was the slime,
That memory by unwitting spell
On those strange shrugs and smiles would dwell,
But then some action high and proud
Of the Young Atotarho far
Swept every doubt as from a star
The strong blast sweeps the transient cloud.

XVIII.

For a brief instant silently
Like a tall form of bronze stood he,
Then rearing more erect his head
And stretching out his arm, he said ;—

XIX.

“Sachems and warriors ! each his eye
Cast round ; the sun about to die
Once more, sends out his loveliest blaze
Lighting our lodges, graves, and maize.
Where these stand now, ye oft have heard
(Brothers ! this heart holds every word)
In time of snows our old men tell,
How by our sires the Kah-kwahs fell ;
Their sons will ne'er then slumber long
De-o-se-o-wah's huts within ;
Rouse warriors ; to the war-path throng !

Here, glory Braves can never win !
Our tomahawks are thirsty ! see
How bright they are ! we 'll let them drink
Deep of the blood of Illini !

Will any of my young men shrink ?
No ! Nun-do-wah-gahs never fail
When points Agreskoué* the trail.
Never the war-path did they shun !
Sachems and warriors ! I have done !"

XX.

A loud "yo-hah !" burst out, but e'er
Another could his mind declare,
A form strode in with lofty tread,
A crimson hatchet in his cling,
Glanced for a moment round the ring,
Then waved the weapon o'er his head.

XXI.

"The Atotarho !" pealed on high ;
Each Brave leaped upward with the cry ;
"The Atotarho !" every head
Was bent ; again arose the shout
"The Atotarho !" quick it spread
Till every quarter pealed it out ;
"The Atotarho !" matrons, maids,
Children, old men, youths, warriors, all

* The War-God of the Iroquois.

Came rushing from the palisades,
Roused by that loved and well-known call.
Whilst the lean dogs that glanced about
Joined their loud barkings to the shout.

XXII.

Grim A-ga-yen-teh's eye flashed fire,
As Thurenserah first strode in
And burst on high the joyful din,
Then lost his brow all trace of ire,
And, bowing, he stood waiting till
He heard the Atotarho's will.

XXIII.

Slow Thurenserah swayed around
The hatchet, hushing every sound,
Whilst every eye to his was turned ;
And, by the crimson hatchet woke
To flame anticipating, burned
Flashing more fierce as now he spoke :
" Braves ! Yon-non-de-yoh comes to slay
And burn ! hoooh ! Nun-do-wah-gah Braves !
To On-on-dah-gah ! up ! away !
Fly warriors ! for your fathers' graves !
Let every young man seek the trail !"
Out burst the warwhoop's quavering wail,
Forth knives and hatchets flashed, once more
The whoop, keen echoing, trembled o'er,
Lodges and palisadoes rung,
Each tree seemed gifted with a tongue,

Each face grew wild, the very air
Gleamed with the weapons wielded there,
Till twilight, soft and gentle, drew
Across the scene its shimmering hue.

CAYUGA LAKE.

XXIV.

Another lovely sunset beamed
Upon Gwe-u-gwe's glassy breast,
Which in responsive lustre gleamed
As if there glowed a second west.
The forests on the Eastern shore
Half robes of golden radiance bore ;
Harsh sights and sounds with melting day
Had from the lovely scene been driven,
Nature seemed kneeling down to pray
In praise and gratitude to Heaven.

XXV.

Sweet sylvan lake ! in memory's gold
Is set the time, when first my eye
From thy green shore beheld thee hold
Thy mirror to the sunset sky !
No ripple brushed its delicate air,
Rich silken tints alone were there ;
The far opposing shore displayed,
Mingling its hues, a tender shade ;

A sail scarce seeming to the sight
To move, spread there its pinion white,
Like some pure spirit stealing on
Down from its realm, by beauty won.
Oh, who could view the scene nor feel
Its gentle peace within him steal,
Nor in his inmost bosom bless
Its pure and radiant loveliness !
My heart bent down its willing knee
Before the glorious Deity ;
Beauty led up my heart to Him,
Beauty, though cold, and poor, and dim
Before His radiance, beauty still
That made my bosom deeply thrill ;
To higher life my being wrought,
And purified my every thought,
Crept like soft music through my mind,
Each feeling of my soul refined,
And lifted me that lovely even
One precious moment up to heaven.

XXVI.

Then, contrast wild, I saw the cloud
The next day rear its sable crest,
And heard with awe the thunder loud
Come crashing o'er thy blackening breast.
Down swooped the Eagle of the blast,
One mass of foam was tossing high,
Whilst the red lightnings, fierce and fast,
Shot from the wild and scowling sky,

And burst in dark and mighty train
A tumbling cataract, the rain.
I saw within the driving mist
Dim writhing stooping shapes—the trees
That the last eve so softly kissed,
And birds so filled with melodies.
Still swept the wind with keener shriek,
The tossing waters higher rolled,
Still fiercer flashed the lightning's streak,
Still gloomier frowned the tempest's fold.

XXVII.

Ah such, ah such is Life, I sighed,
That lovely yester-eve and this !
Now it reflects the radiant pride
Of youth and hope and promised bliss,
Earth's future track and Eden seems
Brighter than e'en our brightest dreams.
Again, the tempest rushes o'er,
The sky's blue smile is seen no more,
The placid deep to foam is tossed,
All trace of beauty, peace, is lost,
Despair is hovering, dark and wild,
Ah ! what can save earth's stricken child !

XXVIII.

Sweet sylvan lake ! beside thee now,
Villages point their spires to heaven,
Rich meadows wave, broad grain-fields bow,
The axe resounds, the plough is driven ;

Down verdant points come herds to drink,
Flocks strew, like spots of snow, thy brink;
The frequent farm-house meets the sight,
Mid falling harvests scythes are bright,
The watch-dog's bark comes faint from far,
Shakes on the ear the saw-mill's jar,
The steamer like a darting bird

Parts the rich emerald of thy wave,
And the gay song and laugh are heard,

But all is o'er the Indian's grave.
Pause, white man! check thy onward stride!
Cease o'er the flood thy prow to guide!
Until is given one sigh sincere
For those who once were monarchs here,
And prayer is made beseeching God
To spare us his avenging rod
For all the wrongs upon the head
Of the poor helpless savage shed;
Who, strong when we were weak, did not
Trample us down upon the spot,
But weak when we were strong, were cast
Like leaves upon the rushing blast.

XXIX.

Sweet sylvan lake! one single gem
Is in thy liquid diadem.
No sister has this little isle
To give its beauty smile for smile;
With it to hear the blue-bird sing;
“Wake leaves, wake flowers! here comes the Spring!”

With it to weave for Summer's tread
Mosses below and bowers o'erhead ;
With it to flash to gorgeous skies
The opal pomp of Autumn skies ;
And when stern Winter's tempests blow
To shrink beneath his robes of snow.

XXX.

Sweet sylvan lake ! that isle of thine
Is like one hope through grief to shine :
Is like one tie our life to cheer ;
Is like one flower when all is sere ;
One ray amidst the tempest's might ;
One star amidst the gloom of night.

XXXI.

Back to the evening of my strain !
Back to the sunset hour again !

THE CAYUGAS.

XXXII.

Amidst the lake's rich jewelled hues
Moves a flotilla of canoes
Toward the green shore ; the sinking light
Paints Ko-lah-ne-kah's lodges low ;
Makes clustered apple-orchards bright,
And maize-fields bathes with rosy glow.

XXXIII.

From the pure grass-green depths all day
The young men had been drawing prey ;
The greedy pike in mottled vest,
The perch in golden armor drest,
The glossy trout with spotted side,
The bass with silver streaks supplied ;
And now, as homeward course they take,
They raise their anthem to the lake.

1.

Gwe-u-gwe the lovely ! Gwe-u-gwe the bright !
Our bosoms rejoice in thy beautiful sight ;
Thou bear'st our kah-we-yahs, we bathe in thy flow,
And when we are hungered thy bounties we know.

2.

In peace now is spread the pure plain of thy waves,
Like the maidens that cast their kind looks on their Braves ;
But when the black tempest comes o'er with its sweep,
Like the Braves on their war-path fierce rages thy deep.

3.

Thou art lovely, when morning breaks forth from the sky,
Thou art lovely, when noon hurls his darts from on high,
Thou art lovely, when sunset paints brightly thy brow,
And in moonlight and starlight still lovely art thou.

4.

Gwe-u-gwe ! Gwe-u-gwe ! how sad would we be,
Were the gloom of our forests not brightened by thee ;
Hah-wen-ne-yo would seem from his sons turned away ;
Gwe-u-gwe ! Gwe-u-gwe ! then list to our lay.

XXXIV.

As the kah-we-yahs touched the shore,
A band of other warriors came
From the thick rank of woods before,
Bending beneath their forest game ;
The slender deer, soft, ebon-eyed,
As if in sorrow he had died ;
The long-eared rabbit dangling down,
The partridge in its mottled brown,
The shaggy bear in sable coat
Gaping with white-fanged crimson throat,
The wild-cat with its eyes' green gleam,
And wolf with jaws one foamy stream.

XXXV.

Pausing upon a little glade
That edged with grassy stripe the shade,
In one great pile their game they threw,
Around it in a circle drew,
Then in wild dance their forms they flung,
Whilst one, the ring that headed sung :

1.

“ Kind Kah-hah-goh !* ”

Our glad praise to thee we send,
Thou art the Gwe-u-gwes’ friend,
Saying, ‘ Warrior, bend thy bow !
Look, Brave, look ! the bear is low ! ’
Saying, ‘ Warrior, aim thy gun !
Look ! the deer’s swift course is run ! ’

Kind Kah-hah-goh !

Thus our praise to thee we send,
Thou art the Gwe-u-gwes’ friend.

2.

“ Kind Kah-hah-goh ! ”

In thy robe of summer green
Thou dost o’er our ambush lean,
Saying, ‘ Warrior, grasp thy axe,
Hush ! the foe is on thy tracks ! ’
Hush ! Whoop ! now in blood he lies !
Wave his scalp before his eyes !

Kind Kah-hah-goh !

Thus our praise to thee we send,
Thou art the Gwe-u-gwes’ friend ! ”

XXXVI.

Ceases the deep and droning strain,
The hunters claim their loads again,

* “ The Spirit of the Forest,” in the Cayuga language.

Joining the Braves then from the lake,
All to the castle, pathway take.

XXXVII.

But words that told surprise and awe,
Burst from the front, and each one saw
Upon a naked mound that stood
Like a green bastion from the wood,
Against the background rich and warm,
In posture of supreme command
Reared to full height—a warrior form,
A hatchet lifted in his hand,
Red as the blushing clouds that threw
Upon the lake their gorgeous hue.

XXXVIII.

A moment's silence fell about,
'Twas broke by Ka-i-na-tra's* shout,
"The Atotarho!" one quick yell
Burst then from every warrior there,—
"The Atotarho!" far the swell
Rolled on the soft and slumbering air;
"The Atotarho!" deep the woods
Thrilled to their inner solitudes;
"The Atotarho!" e'en the lake
Seemed into that one sound to break;
Then the shout fell, as, flashing, sped
The comer's eye across the crowd,

* "The Knife" in Cayuga.

And with his hatchet o'er his head,
He spoke in tones that rang aloud
To every bosom, "Ho, ye Braves!
The bloody Yon-non-de-yoh comes
To seek us in our forest-homes!
Warriors! love ye your fathers' graves?
To On-on-dah-gah, Braves! haste! haste!
Each foot upon the trail be placed,
Gwe-u-gwes, rouse! like Eagles go!
Warriors, all haste! all meet the foe!"

THE ONEIDAS.

XXXIX.

Morning had winged its radiance down,
Bathing one half the hemlock's head,
Tipping the dogwood's lowlier crown,
The laurels then beneath it spread.
The mist had furled its plumes on high,
Blue robed the late flushed, varied sky,
And the glad birds their chorus gay
Had ceased, to flit from spray to spray;
The deer had left the grassy glade
And crouched again within the shade,
And the whole forest realm once more
A summer day's rich lustre wore.

XL.

Ku-na-wa-lo-ah's lodges too
Were glittering in the golden hue;

The circling palisades were bright
And the short lanes were streaked with light.

XLI.

As the great orb on tiptoe stood
Upon a neighboring knoll of wood,
The Prophet, a black bearskin spread
Around his form, with solemn tread
Came to the Council House, reared low
And long amidst the trodden square;
Pealed out a cry drawn shrill and slow,
And as the echo died in air,
Warriors in pomp of paint and plume,
Sires in bright robes that decked their gloom,
Matrons and maids displaying bead
And crimson skirt, round every head
Thick strawberry-leaves in garlands spread
The rich ripe fruit amongst, with speed
The narrow ways came thronging through,
And in the square their numbers drew.

XLII.

There the young Yu-we-lon-doh* proud,
Whose deeds were on the war-path loud,
Stood in his plumaged, painted pride,
With the grim Prophet at his side.

* Meaning "Wind" in Oneida.

THE STRAWBERRY DANCE.

XLIII.

Now must the Council Square's expanse
Echo the usual Strawberry Dance,
And thanks each bosom render there
To Fire and Water, Earth and Air.

XLIV.

The file, the Council House around
Was ranged :—first, Yu-we-lon-doh high,
Looking the Brave, his actions showed ;
The bear-skinned Prophet next him frowned,
Upon the Orient fixed his eye ;
And then, with sight that eager glowed,
The stalwart warriors ; then the sires,
Burning with all their manhood's fires ;
And last the women, every glance
Flashing impatient for the dance.

XLV.

Beside the Council Building's door
The rude bowl-drum a patriarch bore,
Whilst took a youth beside him stand,
With the gus-tah-weh-sah* in hand.

* The Indian rattle—a gourd filled with dry beans.

XLVI.

Upon them, from the Eastern sky,
Looked Hah-wen-ne-yo's blazing eye ;
His azure breast was o'er them gleaming
 With clouds in wreaths of spotless hue,
A band of his good genii seeming
 The coming grateful rite to view.

XLVII.

The soft yet brilliant sunshine streamed
 On round-topped lodge and palisade ;
In rising quick pulsations gleamed
 O'er the domed maize-fields next arrayed,
And flashed upon the leafy dress
Of the encircling wilderness.

XLVIII.

First, Yu-we-lon-doh bowed his head
To where the sun its splendor shed,
Then waved his arm—the drum awoke,
The rattle into clatterings broke ;
And forward, with his rocking feet,
The Chief began the ground to beat,
Swelling his guttural anthem strain,
Followed by all the stamping train,
Each joining in at every close
Where Hah-wen-ne-yo's praise arose ;
Whilst the long ring the square around,
Like a slow coiling serpent wound.

1.

“ Earth, we thank thee ! thy great frame
Bears the stone from whence we came,
And the boundless sweeping gloom,
Of our glorious League the home ;
Thou the strawberry’s seed dost fold,
Thou its little roots dost hold,
First of all the fruits that raise
Gifts for us in summer days.

Thanks, too, thanks we give thee, lowly,
Hah-wen-ne-yo, great and holy !
Maker, wise ! of all the sire,
Earth and Water, Air and Fire !

2.

“ Water, thanks ! we safely glide
On thy bosom long and wide ;
In thy rills their way that take
Through sweet flowers our thirst we slake ;
Thou dost give the strawberry-vine
Drink, when hot the sunbeams shine,
Till its leaves spread fresh and bright,
And its buds burst forth in white.

Thanks, too, thanks we give thee, lowly,
Hah-wen-ne-yo, great and holy !
Maker, wise ! of all the sire,
Earth and Water, Air and Fire !

3.

"Air, we thank thee! for the breeze
Sweeping off the dire disease;
Thou dost bring the gentle rains;
Thou dost cool our feverish veins;
Thou dost kiss the strawberry-flower
Nestling in its grassy bower,
Till its little wreath of snow
Swings its fragrance to and fro.

Thanks, too, thanks we give thee, lowly,
Hah-wen-ne-yo, great and holy!
Maker, wise! of all the sire,
Earth and Water, Air and Fire!

4.

"Fire, we thank thee! for thy ball
With its glory brightening all,
And the blaze which warms our blood,
Lights our weed and cooks our food,
To thy glance the strawberry swells
With its ripening particles,
Till the fruit is at our tread
In its beauty rich and red.

Thanks, too, thanks we give thee, lowly,
Hah-wen-ne-yo, great and holy!
Maker, wise! of all the sire,
Earth and Water, Air and Fire!"

XLIX.

The last loud strain had scarcely died,
When a light form, with hurried tread,
Strode to the panting chieftain's side,
Uplifting high a hatchet red.
A look—a pause of silence brief,
And then “The Atotarho!” rung
In voice of thunder from the chief—
Forth, warrior, sire, maid, matron, sprung;
“The Atotarho!” echoed high;
It filled the woods, it filled the sky,
With manhood's shout, and woman's cry.

L.

“Hark, Oneotas!”* loud and clear
Now swelled on every listening ear
The Atotarho's clarion tones—
“Hark! Yon-non-de-yoh comes to tread
Into the dust your fathers' bones;
Up, warriors! ere the day be sped!
To On-on-dah-gah as for life,
Agreskoué calls out for strife!”

THE CANOE VOYAGE.

LI.

Two Indians in a bark canoe,
Went skimming up a rapid stream

*The Oneidas.

That lay in many a winding gleam,
The dark primeval forest through,
Here, on the brushwood-tangled banks,
Rose the tall trees in column'd ranks;
Whilst slanting, there, they closely wove
A thick and bowery roof above.
Frequent some great elm, undermined,
Within the wave its boughs inclined,
Causing the water, sliding dark,
To wheel and fret in flashing spark.

Dead jagged logs lay all about,
Black from the shores protruding out ;
The tips light tilting as the furrow
Caused by the paddles, on them bore,
Or, as the musk-rat scampered o'er,
Scared by the dashing to its burrow.
Now the stream slumbered in a mass
Of shade, like polished sable glass :
And now it fluttered o'er its stones,
In hollow and æolian tones.

LII.

The Hah-yah-do-yah's paddles wide,
With rapid dips the waters spurn,
Whilst with his usual look of pride,
Sits Thurenserah at the stern.
Each side the climbing laurels spread
Their pink-tinged chalices o'erhead ;
And now and then the thickets fling
So low across their sylvan bowers,

The Hah-yah-do-yah's feathers bring
The spangled dogwood's creamy flowers
Showered, like a sudden fall of snow,
Upon the wrinkled glass below ;
Whilst in some sweeping aisle of green,
The tasselled chestnut on their sight,
Where a long sunbeam casts its sheen,
Sends flashes quick of golden light.
The broken, glancing rift from out,
At the white moth low quivering o'er,
Leaps like a flying-fish the trout,
Then falls with echoing splash before :
As threads the prow some channel narrow,
The snipe darts from it like an arrow ;
To his deep den of knotted roots
The otter, a swift shadow, shoots ;
Startled from his o'erhanging limb,
The blue kingfisher leaves the flood ;
Wades from the marge the heron slim,
The gorgeous sheldrake seeks the wood.

LIII.

But thickets, spotted all around,
Dividing into threads the course,
Till scarce a struggling way is found,
Proclaim them near the river's source ;
And scarce the shallow waters now
Float e'en their bubble of a prow,
They seek the marge, the bark they lift

O'er Deo-wain-sta* tread they swift,
Threading the solemn trees that rise
In shapes majestic to the skies ;
And in the stooping light they glide
Down wild O-wah-nah-dah-gah's† tide,
That steals, with broader breast, between
The same close wilderness of green.
Over this wide magnificence,

Laced by the bright meandering streak,
Solitude broods unbroke, intense,

Save when some speeding eagle's shriek
Startles the air, or howl of wolf
Issues from some black bordering gulf.

LIV.

Now liquid alleys pass they through,
Midst sylvan islets set so near
That, frightened by the swift canoe,
From one another leaps the deer.
From tree-top to its opposite
They see the flying-squirrel flit
Slant on its membrane wings across
The narrowed strip of ruffled gloss,
Then, down the sparkling frothing rift,
The quivering bark shoots free and swift,
The Hah-yah-do-yah's ready skill

* Deo-wain-sta is the Iroquois name for the Portage between Wood Creek and the Mohawk River.

† O-wah-nah-dah-gah is the Iroquois name for the Mohawk River.

Wielding the frail light thing at will ;
The pointed rock avoiding now,
Foam, like some angry bear's tusk, churning,
In its blind pathway, then the prow,
As if by instinct, safely turning.

LV.

As sunset flushed the sky with red,
They came to where a lakelet spread,
With domes of clay 'twas spotted o'er,
Where beavers plunged and skimmed the wave,
Whilst others, busily on the shore,
The sapling gnawed, or dragging, gave
Its leafy honors to the tide,
Toward the twined dam their prize to guide ;
But as the bark amidst them passed,
The sentry struck his blow, and fast
Amidst a shower of strokes all vanished,
Till every sight and sound were banished
Of the late bustling scene to tell,
With silence settling like a spell,
Whilst passed the prow the lakelet calm,
And, bowing, crossed the crashing dam.

LVI.

Then, as the night its shadows wrought,
The dim tree-slanted brink they sought,
Where some wide spruce above them bent
Its bristling branches for a tent ;

And slumbered till the morning came
Firing the heavens with cheerful flame,
And sent them once more on their way,
With woods and waters glittering gay.

THE MOHAWK'S SCALP DANCE.

LVII.

At last, as in the glowing west
The sun once more rolled down its crest,
They came to where a creek laid down,
At the broad stream, its subject crown.
Upon the bank, with maizefields green,
An Indian palisade was seen ;
Between it and the brink, a ring
Of painted Braves e'en now was forming ;
As sought the bark a bush—the swing
Began, the dance each moment warming ;
Till, while the drum gave measured stroke,
The scalp-song of the warriors woke.

1.

“ Whoop the whoop ! dance the dance !
Let the knife and hatchet glance !
Peal aloud, aloud, the strain !
Pequod dogs ! they mourn their slain !
Whoop ! whoop ! the Pequod dogs,
How they seek the clustered bogs !

Wave their bloody scalps on high !
Pequod dogs ! how low they lie !
Whoop ! whoop ! the ground is red !
Pequod dogs ! they mourn their dead !
Great Agreskouè ! to thee
Swells our song of victory !

2.

“ See our war-path ! far it winds,
Pequod hunting-grounds it finds ;
Scarce our mark on earth we make ;
Now we glide as glides the snake.
Pequod dogs are slumbering deep,
Near, still near, more near we creep :
Now we climb the palisades ;
Not a sound the air invades.
Whoop, whoop ! crash, crash !
In the lodges now we dash !
Whoop ! whoop ! our hatchets fly,
Gleam our knives ! They die ! They die !
Whoop ! whoop ! their scalps we wrench !
Blood in streams their castle drench !
Pequod dogs, like leaves around—
See ! they pile the very ground !
See ! they bend like women now !
Whoop ! our foot is on their brow !
Great Agreskouè ! to thee
Swells our song of victory !

LVIII.

Ere the last shrill-toned echo sank,
A figure climbed the shelving bank,
Holding a tomahawk on high,
Gleaming in deepest vermeil dye.
“The Atotarho!” loudly sounded
From every lip, and toward him bounded
Ye-an-te-kah-noh.*

“Mohawks, hear!”

The Atotarho uttered shrill—

“Your battle-whoops peal louder still,
To red Agreskouè so dear.
Braves! Yon-non-de-yoh comes! His feet
Are on the war-path! Men of blood!
To On-on-dah-gah like a flood
This Matchi-Manitou† to meet!
Away! stern Bears! in all your might,
Ere on ye dawns again the light!

* Ye-an-te-kah-noh means a “War-club” in the Mohawk tongue.

† Matchi-Manitou, “Bad Spirit.”

CANTO SEVENTH.

THE MARCH.
THE WAR DANCE.
THE COUNCIL.

THE QUARREL.
THE PRIESTESS.
THE SACRED FLAME.



CANTO SEVENTH.

THE MARCH.

I.

DAYS sped along, the rude flotilla traced
The shoreward waters of Ontario's waste.
Up the Oswego's narrow rapid tide
With struggling efforts the invaders glide ;
On either hand the crowded forests gave
A sombre darkness to the rushing wave ;
Banner and cannon, pike and cuirass cast
Unwonted glitterings as the foemen passed ;
Upon the oak-tree's scaly breast they flashed,
Out with a scream the startled eagle dashed,
Within the thicket's depths a gleam they flung ;
Forth with a snort the brown bear awkward sprung,
Quick slid the otter down the shelving brink,
Back shrank the doe and fawn about to drink,
The beavers plunged within each mud-built hut,
As through their dam of trees a path was cut.
Ha ! look, proud Frontenac ! upon yon tree
The haughty savage still casts scorn at thee !
Drawn on its naked wood in tints of red
Thou, with the warriors of thy host, art spread ;

Whilst at the roots the bundled rushes show
The stern defiance of thy tawny foe.

II.

Broader gleamings upon them break,
Through the thick forest—"The lake, the lake!"
Over its wide and lucid glass
Gallantly, swiftly, now they pass;
Dash and ripple, and ripple and dash,
How the depths tumble, and sparkle, and flash!
Hushed so the silence, at every sound
Echo is up and away at a bound;
Solitude tangible seems to their gaze,
Starting from sleep to shrink back in amaze;
Hundreds of water-fowl rise from the sheet,
Screaming and soaring on pinions fleet;
In the deep waters of purest green,
Fishes in myriad swarms are seen;
Along the margin, a tract of white
Glitters like silver beneath the light.
A shout went up,—were the old dreams true?
Was treasure there flashing its dazzling hue?
Boat after boat to the margin shot,
Numbers thronged to the sparkling spot;
And the salt springs shone to their curious eye,
Mantling all over their pearly die.
But away at last the sunbeams shrank,
And the whole fleet moored to the marshy bank.

Night closes round, the splendid moonlight beams :
The leaf-roofed tents are chequered with the gleams ;
Beneath the gorgeous diadem of the skies
The whole wide scene in delicate beauty lies ;
One blaze of silver Gar-noh-gwe-yoh glows,
Its bosom hushed in beautiful repose ;
Midst the grand woods the light its quiet weaves,
Save where the watch-fires gleam in crimson through the
leaves.

THE WAR-DANCE.

IV.

The mellow sunset glow that lay
On Frontenac's debarked array,
The On-on-dah-gah Hollow too,
Suffused with soft and lovely hue.
The maize-fields wore a roseate flush,
The placid stream displayed a blush,
While the surrounding forests seemed
As if with slanted spears they gleamed.

V.

Swarms of dark figures roamed around
Within the castle's spacious bound.
The warriors of the League had all
Obeyed their Atotarho's call.
The Mohawk, oldest brother keeping

Watch the Long House's east porch o'er ;
The fierce, wild Seneca, unsleeping,
 Making his breast the western door ;
The Oneida, offspring of the stone,
The mother now alas left lone ;
And the Cayuga from that flood,
Whose hue seemed from the summer wood.

VI.

Of the eight Totems, one each breast
Displayed, in blue tattoo impressed.
Here crawled the TORTOISE, glared the BEAR ;
The WOLF there lurked within his lair ;
The CRANE on slender limb stood here,
Here bowed the snipe, there leaped the DEER ;
The BEAVER here made waddling walk,
And high in air there soared the HAWK,
While frequently was seen the mark
 Of the HO-NONT-KOH next the other,
 Which none decyphered but a brother ;
Order mysterious, secret, dark !
Each making (all save this unknown,
And this by only actions shown,)
The other's weal or woe his own.
The Atotarho was its head :
And through the League its members spread,
The head Chiefs of the other nations
Holding within next highest stations ;
Save A-ga-yen-teh who kept free,
From craftiest, basest policy.

VII.

All at their backs the hatchet bore,
The curved knife keenly gleamed before.
War-paint on every face was spread,
 Though showed the form the naked skin,
Save the blue waist-cloth, legging red,
 And the rich quill-worked moccasin.
Fusees were in each hand, each eye
 Was flashing fierce with swarthy fire ;
All showed that danger threatening nigh,
 Had roused their deepest martial ire.
Whilst womanhood, age, childhood lay
 Within the Oneidas' neighboring woods,
Until the storm should sweep away,
 Now rising o'er their solitudes.

VIII.

In the broad square a post was placed
 With stripes of red—war's hue—arrayed,
Save in one spot where, rudely traced,
 Was the League's coat of arms displayed.
Five Braves that in a circle stood
 With hands tight grasped in one another's—
 A heart amidst them—Tribal brothers,
Banded in one firm brotherhood.

IX.

The broad moon's sweet delicious light
Began to bathe the summer night ;

Upon their domes the maize-plants glowed,
The stream a track of diamonds showed,
And the still, windless forests stood
Entranced within the pearly flood.

x.

As the sky kindled to the moon's rich flame,
Within the area throngs of warriors came ;
Around the post in mazy file they wound,
Then couched in rings successive on the ground,
Within, two gaunt and withered figures sat,
With drum and rattle, each upon his mat,
Whilst upward streamed in one high ruddy spire
Beside the post the usual war-dance fire.
The dusky ring wore looks of fixed repose,
Until at last a tall young warrior rose ;
With hatchet, knife, and war-club armed was he,
A snowy mantle falling to his knee
Upon his breast the totem of the BEAR,
The Ho-nont-koh stripe too, placed conspicuous there
Midst record of his deeds, one crimson blaze ;
Dress worn alone on most momentous days !
'Twas the young Atotarho ! slow and grave
He reached the fire, and then one whoop he gave,
And, as his brow grew dark, and wild his glance,
He broke into a stamping swinging dance ;
From right to left he went, the hollow beat
Of the ga-nu-jah echoing to his feet
Chaunting in measure to his rocking frame,
Whilst from the two old forms a ceaseless droning came.

“ Thurenserah smiles to hear
Agreskouè within his ear
Whisper, ‘ Warrior, foes are near !’
I’ll eat their flesh, I’ll drink their blood !
Eagle, there’ll be dainty food
When thou stoopest to the wood !
Thurenserah smiles to know
Blood shall at his hatchet flow ;
Blood, blood, a crimson flood ;
Thurenserah smiles to hear
Agreskouè within his ear
Whisper, ‘ Warrior, foes are near !’
 Hooh ! whoop ! foes are near !
Whisper, ‘ Warrior, foes are near !’

“ Bends Agreskouè his crest
At the deeds upon my breast,
Fifty death-screams have I woke !
Fifty scalps are in my smoke !
I’ll eat their flesh, I’ll drink their blood !
Frenchmen will be plenteous food
For the eagle in the wood ;
Thurenserah listens low,
In the grass he hears the foe,
Quick he seeks the ambush ! see !
Now he’s aiming the fusee !
Now he fires—the foe is dead—
Off his dripping scalp is shred—
Now beside the lodge he creeps—
Hush ! within, the foeman sleeps—

Whoop ! he dashes down the door !
Whoop ! the foeman drops in gore !
Whoop ! the wife beside him dies !
Whoop ! beside the infant lies !
Whoop ! whoop ! whoop ! the torch is gleaming !
See ! whoop ! see ! the lodge is streaming !
I'll eat their flesh ! I'll drink their blood !
Blood, blood, a crimson flood !
Thurenserah smiles to hear
Footsteps sounding in his ear,
Telling that the foe is near ;
 Hooh ! whoop ! the foe is near.
Telling that the foe is near."

XI.

Thus far the strain had made advance,
 When forth dark A-ga-yen-teh bounded,
And joining in the stamping dance,
 His war-song too he loudly sounded.
Then Yu-we-lon-doh at his back,
And Ka-i-na-tra in his track,
Ye-an-te-kah-noh following him,
And then Ska-nux-heh fierce and grim,
Till the first ring of Braves was springing
Wildly around, all wildly singing ;
Their limbs in strange contortions flinging,
Plunging their knives, their hatchets swinging,
Whilst rose the chaunt, and thrilled the yell,
And on the post the war-club fell.

XII.

And now the mimic fight begun ;
They strike, they scalp, they meet, they shun,
They creep on the earth, and they bend on the knee,
Tomahawk launching, and aiming fusee,
Pealing their war-whoops, and striking their blows,
As in eye to eye, hand to hand, strife with their foes ;
The shake of the rattle, the drum's rapid beat,
Blending with weapon clash, war-shout and feet ;
Till, faint with exhaustion, they reel from the ring,
Whilst others impatient, in place of them spring.
On went the war-dance—the beautiful moon
Poured down the sweet quiet smile from her noon ;
On went the war-dance—she stooped to the west ;
On went the war-dance—she shrouded her crest ;
And not till the east was made bright with the sun,
Did the lone silent spot tell the war-dance was done.

THE COUNCIL.

XIII.

The glorious day resumed its bright dominion ;
Hues, such as tremble o'er the flashing pinion
Of the archangel nearest to the throne,
Along the rim of the horizon shone.
Now the rich colors deepen in the sky,
Now the hill-pines have caught a golden dye,

And now a glorious burst of light
Makes the whole sylvan landscape bright ;
Leaves in the downy-winged breezes quiver ;
Mist curls up from the dimpling river ;
And out breaks dew-spangled thicket and tree
Into a chorus of harmony.

XIV.

Now was displayed to many a gaze
An Indian coming through the maize.
A nearer view, " We-ah-dah !" high
Arose the joyful welcome cry ;
The warriors rushed to meet him, each
With outstretched hand and kindest speech,
For, towering in the tribe, stood he
A Brave of wide authority ;
His a strong heart that ne'er had dropped,
His a proud soul that ne'er had stooped.

XV.

He strode along with hasty tread
And in his covering look was dread,
Dread blent with shame as if he strove
To lift his heart the fear above,
But could not ; still, whilst welcomes warm
Gave the glad warriors, crowding nigh,
He for the instant, reared his form,
As in his past days flashed his eye,
And, with his usual mein, he gave
Salute in turn to every Brave.

And gone the craven sign that must
At the first sight have roused distrust
Had they not in the unlooked-for meeting
Of nothing thought but joy of greeting,
For on We-an-dah every breast
Reposed in full implicit rest ;
And all were filled with deep delight
That he, escaping from the foe,
Had come to aid them with his might
At Yon-non-de-yoh's threatened blow.
Ah, forest Chieftain ! noble Brave !
Wert thou indeed so mean a thing !
Better have filled a warrior's grave
Thou Eagle with a broken wing !

XVI.

Where the grim war-dance lately whirled around
Once more the warriors crouched upon the ground ;
The tints retouched on every thoughtful face
And every weapon quiet in its place ;
Sachems, and those in years and wisdom old
Whose thoughts in council had been often told,
And Braves whose deeds amidst their enemies
Were traced in crimson on the annal-trees,
And by the old men of the nations laid
In memory deep for song, the circles made ;
Whilst gathered throngs around these circles, some
Striking the war-post, but in council dumb ;
Some neither known for wisdom or for deed,
The others, youths, who glowed for glory's meed.

XVII.

Upon a rich beaver-skin was set
The gorgeous pride of the Calumet :
As the light touched its feathers, like sunlit dew,
It glittered all over with flashing hues.
Beside, shone the flame of the council, its gleams
Ghastly and pale in the morning's beams.

XVIII.

Head of the circle, on a rich stained mat
With his proud look, the Atotarho sat.
At length a sign he gave, and forward came
The Hah-yah-do-yah with a torch of flame,
Who seized the Calumet, and with the weed
Filled the red bowl and kindled it ; as through
The air meandered the light wreaths of blue,
He pointed toward the sun the feathered reed,
Then toward the earth, and then around in air ;
The first imploring Hah-wen-ne-yo's care,
The next to sooth dark Hah-ne-go-ate-geh,
The last to make all evil Genii flee ;
To Thurenserah then the pipe he gave,
Toward heaven, on earth, the smoky volumes wave ;
Then to We-an-dah next the Chieftain seated,
Who the same solemn offering act repeated ;
To A-ga-yen-teh then, the next beside,
Till the rich bauble passed the circuit wide.

Then rose We-an-dah, now his mien was high,
Yet quick and restless oped and shut his eye,
And as with dignity his arm he spread
“We-an-dah greets the Atotarho!” said.
“In Yon-non-de-yoh’s dungeon dark and lone,
We-an-dah languished like a toad in stone,
Until he blinded Yon-non-de-yoh’s eyes,
For the fox learned We-an-dah to be wise :
He sang a song in Yon-non-de-yoh’s ear,
For oft he’s stopped the mocking-bird to hear ;
He spun a web meant only to beguile,
For oft he’s watched the cunning spider’s toil ;
On Yon-non-de-yoh smiled his lips, not heart,
Until he bade him from his cell depart,
Placed him a brother at his hated side,
And of his host then wished him to be guide ;
We-an-dah would not lead their bloody tread,
And when night filled their eyes with slumber, fled
Great Atotarho! ’tis We-an-dah speaks !
A warrior’s paint is glowing on his cheeks,
He in the dance a warrior’s deeds has sung,
He is no snake ! lies sit not on his tongue !
We-an-dah says then, fly ! wait not the foe !
In crushing wrath will fall his dreadful blow.
See’st thou yon leaves ?—as thick his warriors crowd
With their great guns that speak such thunder loud ;
Balls too that falling burst in flames, and dash
Destruction round them like the lightning’s flash ;
Stockade and lodge will shrivel at their breath,
And every warrior find a speedy death.”

XIX.

He ceased—low guttural sounds ran through
The startled circle ; eye sought eye
In doubt ; each thoughtful visage grew
Darker, as though the very sky
Had with a sudden drop let fall
Over the scene a shadowy pall.
That he, We-an-dah, thus should speak,
The valiant warrior, just and true !

Whose spirit like an eagle flew,
It made their hearts turn faint and weak.
Glances began to falter round,
Ears bent as if on distant sound,
And, midst the outer dense array,
Movements began to gather way,
As though to scatter in dismay.
But Thurenserah rose, his arm
He waved ; it was as if a charm
Held the assemblage ; every eye

Was fixed upon him as he stood,
And looked around him proud and high,
As though to shame their fearful mood ;
Then, striding in mid-ring, he spoke
In tones that fire in all awoke.

XX.

“ Sachems and warriors ! can it be
You tremble at an enemy ?
What ! Ongue-Honwee crouching low

In fear before the threatened blow !
Shall a few paltry words of air
Down to the dust your courage bear ?
Have you not grasped the hatchet red ?
Have you not struck the battle-post ?
Scarce have you ceased your war-dance tread !
Scarce echo of your songs is lost !
Shame, warriors of the Long House ! shame !
Scorn Yon-non-de-yoh's thunder-flame,
Have you forgot that here is burning
The pure Ho-de-no-sonne fire ?
Rather than, from its splendor turning,
Leave it to Yon-non-de-yoh's spurning,
Around it glad should all expire !
See ! its smoke streams before your eye
Like Hah-wen-ne-yoh's scalp-lock high !
Remember, far as step your feet
From Winter's snow to Summer's heat,
Scatter the tribes like frightened deer ;
And e'en where'er we turn our brow,
The boldest young men shake with fear,
The woods as though with tempests bow.
How often has the Great White Bird
Seen us returning from our path
Loaded with scalps, and, joyful, heard
The songs that told our warrior wrath.
Senecas ! in the month of snows
Our old men chaunt that time of pride,
When the last Yon-non-de-yoh rose,
To dash beneath his wrathful stride
Ye—the strong, the fast-closed, mighty door

Of our Long House, within to tread ;
No Ho-ne-ho-ont basely fled,
But bloody Yon-non-de-yoh tore
His flesh amidst your briers, till lame,
Wearied, and frightened he became ;
And like a footsore dog he turned
From a few huts and cornfields burned,
Back on his war-path, whilst ye hung
Your pole with scalps—your songs ye sung.

XXI.

“ Gwe-u-gwes ! often have ye fought
Beneath your Atotarho’s eye !
Glorious have been the deeds you ’ve wrought,
Gwe-u-gwes ! Braves ! ye will not fly !

XXII.

“ Oft Oneotas ! on your path
The Atotarho’s seen your wrath,
When breast to breast the foe you ’ve met,
He ne’er has seen ye falter yet.

XXIII.

“ Mohawks ! stern men of blood ! ne’er ye
Have fled before your enemy !
From Hah-rah’s drift-wood stream, to where
The Pequods on the salt waves sail,
Your scalp-whoops oft have filled the air,
There oft has led your bloody trail.
Fierce Bears ! shall Yon-non-de-yoh say
‘ Women !’ to ye, ‘ away, away !’

XXIV.

“ Last, On-on-dah-gahs ! always true !
Proud people of the hills ! to you
Your Atotarho speaks ;—the knife
Of Yon-non-de-yoh gleams above
This your own castle ; let your love
Be shown for it in deadliest strife.
Remember ! in yon palisade
Your fathers’ sacred bones are laid,
Oft has De-kan-e-so-ra’s voice
Of music made your souls rejoice.
If from Sken-ec-ta-da his speech
Upon the wind your ear could reach,
How would it echo to your heart ?
My On-on-dah-gahs ! act your part
As should ye, when upon his path
Comes Yon-non-de-yoh in his wrath,
And his stern hand with torch of red
Is raised above your castle’s head.
Heart of the League ! which holds the glow
Of the pure flame ! ye ’ll brave the foe !

XXV.

“ Grasp all then tomahawk and knife,
Amidst the leaves like serpents hide,
As Yon-non-de-yoh comes in pride ;
Then leap like wild cats to the strife.
And our deep forest’s frowning gloom
Will rest on Yon-non-de-yoh’s tomb.”

XXVI.

He ceased—the wild “yo-hah” burst out
From the whole crowd in blended shout,
Their flashing weapons waved about ;
Away their sudden panic bore,
Up rose their faltering hearts again,
And their stern native pride once more
Rushed back to all its former reign.

XXVII.

Next, Sken-an-do-ah* slowly went
Within the ring, looked slowly round—
Each weapon fell, sunk every sound,
And every eye was on him bent.
The Atotarho, whilst the thrall
Of childhood Thurenserah claimed,
High as a chieftain was he famed,
Wise too and just, and loved by all.

XXVIII.

“ Sixty long years have in their flight
My scalp-lock streaked with threads of white,
But never,” said he, “ have these eyes
Beheld a chief so great and wise
As Thurenserah ; to his words
Listen ; they come like songs of birds
In time of blossoms to my ear,

* “ The Deer” in the On-on-dah-gah tongue.

My arm to nerve, my soul to cheer.
Dread Yon-non-de-yoh's thunder ! who
 Will in this ring of warriors stand,
And own his heart e'er fainter grew
 At death ; shall Yon-non-de-yoh's hand"—
And here his stern and flashing eye
 Rolled round the ring in scornful glow,
 "Scare us with his uplifted blow
From where our fathers' ashes lie ?
No ! let his great guns shake our woods,
We 'll crouch within their solitudes ;
And, as comes on his haughty tread,
 From tree and bush our shots will gleam,
 And in his bosom's dearest stream,
Our knives and hatchets will be red !"

THE QUARREL.

XXIX.

At the brave Sken-an-do-ah's close,
Again the deep "yo-hah !" arose.
But whilst each savage eye was beaming
 With thoughts that for a time had slept,
And knife and tomahawk were gleaming,
 Up frowning A-ga-yen-teh stepped.
In all its foulest venom now
His soul sat coiled upon his brow ;
Away had vanished caution's power
 That held his face and tongue alike,

For now he thought had come the hour,
The Atotarho down to strike.

xxx.

“ Brothers ! when frowns the tempest-cloud,
And lightnings gleam as air grows black,
The very eagle fierce and proud,
Sweeping high up in boundless track,
Turns his keen pinions to the peak,
Ere the wild storm its wrath shall wreak.
When the red flame with flash and roar,
Wrapping the crackling woods is near,
The famished panther flies before,
E’en though beneath him lies the deer ;
Brothers ! stern Yon-non-de-yoh’s wrath
Will, like the tempest, sweep our path,
Like the red flame will burn his eye ;
A bird is singing in my ear,
‘ Death and destruction hover near,
Wait not the foe ! fly, brothers, fly ! ’ ”

xxxI.

“ Coward ! ” a fierce keen voice rang out,
And Thurenserah with his shout,
High bounding to his warrior sped ;
In frenzied fury blazed his look,
For rage the very hatchet shook,
He held above his head ;
“ Back ! am I not, base creeping thing,
Thy Atotarho, and thy king ?

Back from my sight !" terrific flame
From A-ga-yen-teh's eye-balls came.

" He will not back ! he scorns thy pride !"
" Then die, foul dog !" the hatchet fell,
And headlong with a broken yell
The traitor fell and died.

Up to their feet the circle sprung,
The outer crowd a moment hung
Bewildered, then tumultuous swung,

Like some great billow in ;
Voice upon voice contending rose,
Eye flashed to eye like mortal foes,
And now and then came sound of blows,

But, pealing o'er the din,
The tones of Thurenserah bore :
" Braves ! Yon-non-de-yoh is before !
Your Atotarho calls once more,
To ambush for the foe !"

A crowd of warriors round him pressed,
The Ho-nont-koh stripe on every breast,
Fierce eye, spread nostril, towering crest,
Showing their martial glow.

Just then, from out the jostling throng,
A rapid hatchet whirled along
Close to his ear, and bounded nigh
A warrior with a whoop, and cry—
" Revenge !" —'Twas A-ga-yen-teh's brother ;
On sprang another—then another—
And still another ; flame on wind

Not sooner wraps the withered wood,
Than through the untamed Indian mind

Rush passion and desire for blood.
We-an-dah's words had soon quick seeds,
Which Thurenserah's utmost skill
Had but sufficed to check, not kill,
And now they bore their fruit in deeds.
Dark A-ga-yen-teh's wily art
Had also gained him many a heart,
And when they saw him in his gore,
And heard the Brave, his brother, call
For vengeance, then, forgetting all,
Those wild hearts boiled in frenzy o'er.

xxxii.

Brave Sken-an-do-ah at a stride
Stood by the Atotarho's side.
"Ho-nont-kohs! Brothers!" shouted he,
"Peal out your whoops!" and loud and free,
The brothers swelled the piercing sound,
Crowding the Atotarho round.
Ye-an-te-kah-noh sent his cry,
Shrill echoed Yu-we-lon-doh's by,
And Ka-i-na-tra pealed his high,
All save Ska-nux-heh—(though by none
Beloved, he too, through courage rare
So prized by Indian minds, had won
At length a slow admission there,
And yet scarce trusted)—

Struggling through
Toward Thurenserah and his band,

Braves sent back whoops at every hand.
Wilder the wild contention grew,
Forth in each grasp keen weapons flew,
Forms struggled, hatchets whizzed in air,
In lifted clutches knives were bare,
Fusees were aimed, shots rang around,
Heads dropped, blood gushed upon the ground,
And death-screams, blent with war-whoops, rose
Frequent from these unnatural foes ;
Ye-an-te-kah-noh fell—beside
Brave Ka-i-na-tra also died ;
In vain the Atotarho sprung,
From point to point his arms outflung,
As if to court the blow.
“ Slay me, but oh, these murders cease ! ”—
The strife seemed only to increase,
Brave upon Brave sank low ;
Whilst Sken-an-do-ah clung beside,
Seeking each threatened blow to ward,
As if all danger he defied,
His Atotarho’s life to guard.

XXXIII.

Ska-nux-heh, in his hand his knife,
Was quiet midst the desperate strife,
But following, following, following still
Where’er the Atotarho went,
Struggling to come more near—until,
Above his back the knife was bent ;
It fell but in the opposing breast

Of Sken-an-do-ah who had pressed
Between, as down 'twas sent :
Dead fell the good old chief ; and on
The unconscious Atotarho won
Still midst the crowd his way,
Whilst glanced Ska-nux-heh swiftly round,
And then once more with stealthy bound
Plunged after through the fray.

THE PRIESTESS.

XXXIV.

But as the storm of whoop and blow
Raged wildest—shrieked a voice in air,
In wild and thrilling tones, "Forbear!"
And reared on the Tcar-jis-ta-yo
Where a small platform crossed its height,
A woman's form met every sight
With rolling eye and outstretched head,
And hair—a black veil—o'er her spread.
"The Priestess!" burst with loud exclaim
Around and at the dreaded name
Ceased whoop, and blow ; and every frame,
Quickly so motionless had grown,
Some with a limb advanced—with arm
Uplifted some—it seemed a charm
Had changed them into stone.
In attitude of stern command,
Toward the fixed throng she stretched her hand,

And cried again more shrill, "Forbear !

Like the blind rattle-snake will ye,
With your sharp fangs your own flesh tear,

When near ye frowns the enemy !"

As though borne downward by a spell,
Each form bent low, each weapon fell ;
On went the voice, "I see a cloud

O'er the Ho-de-no-sonne head !

Is every warrior's spirit cowed ?

Is every warrior's courage dead ?"

Up Thurenserah's hatchet rose,

Up Yu-we-lon-doh's at his side,

The Braves of the Ho-nont-koh close

Around with looks of flashing pride,

Rearing their tomahawks, and then

Burst from these stern devoted men

The thrilling war-whoop, rolling keen

Far o'er the distant forest scene,

Causing the eagle hovering near,

With a quick flap to disappear.

XXXV.

The priestess raised her smiling face,

But the loud whoop no echo finds

Amongst the rest ; deep, deep the trace

Both by We-an-dah (who from sight

Had vanished in the late wild fight,)

And A-ga-yen-teh left in minds

Untaught, impulsive ; then the breath

Of the great guns that winged such death

With terror ever had been fraught,
Within their simple savage thought ;
The combat also had renewed

Suspicion of the Ho-nont-koh sway
Which A-ga-yen-teh had imbued,

Thinking this too might open way
At Thurenserah ; and the pain
Of their fresh wounds, friends, kindred slain,
Old rankling wrongs, and private feud,
• Jealousy, envy, all the brood

Of passions wakened in their might,
Spread their fierce withering influence now,
And each bent eye and sullen brow
Told of submission, or of flight.

XXXVI.

“ And can it be,” the Priestess said,
That the League’s Braves would to the tread
Of Yon-non-de-yoh leave the Flame !”
A breathless silence reigned around,
Each clouded look was on the ground
And motionless each frame.

XXXVII.

Once more extended she her hand
And said in tones first winning bland,
Then rising loudly on the air
Till like a trumpet rang they there,
“ From yon tall pine the feeblest eye
Can view the waters of the Lake

Where the three Wise Ones formed the Tie
Which, fond, they trusted nought would break;
Whose records ye at Feasts have heard
Ho-no-we-na-to oft repeat!
(De-kan-e-so-ra! tongue of bird!
How often has thy music sweet
In praise too of that League been given.
Ah why, when darkness now is driven
O'er the Ho-de-no-sonne day
Are both of ye so far away!)
Warriors, ye will not break that Tie
And from stern Yon-non-de-yoh fly,
As if he was the O-yal-kher black
Coming on his devouring track!
No! when he comes, ye'll be, oh Braves!
Like that bold creature from the waves,
That rose and made the enemy
Fierce as he was, back, bleeding, flee.

XXXVIII.

Still from them not a voice was heard,
Still no one from his posture stirred;
Although the Ho-nont-kohs with quick breath
Clutched weapons, and fixed eyes of flame,
Shoulder to shoulder every frame
Stood the Tcar-jis-ta-yo beneath,
Looking mute scorn at those so base
Who still like cowards, held their place.

XXXIX.

But once more was the silence broke,
As once more thus the Priestess spoke,
“Braves! hear again the words of dread
By bright To-gan-a-we-tah said
A hundred hundred moons ago,
‘When the White Throats shall come, if ye
Shall separate, then yourselves will throw
The Long House down, destroy the Tree
Of Peace, and trample out the Flame!’
Must now this doom our people claim?—
Must ye with fierce and wicked will
This awful prophecy fulfill?”

XL.

Then the Grand Sachem rose, a sire
Of wisdom!—“O-kah* will not linger
Until the blasting Thunder-fire
Of Yon-non-de-yoh comes; the finger
Of Hah-wen-ne-yo points the way
Into the deepest woods; delay
Brothers, no longer! I have said!”
And down once more he bent his head.
Next rose Ot-koh-yah†—“Scarce has moved
Yon thin white cloud an arrow’s flight
Since I, the only friend I loved,
Saw perish; hooh! I will not fight!”

* “Snow” in On-on-dah-gah.

† “Wampum” in the language of the Cayugas.

Kul-ho-an* then : " I ever thought
 That the Ho-nont-kohs evil wrought ;
 A warrior's heart is open ! I
 Wait not ; my counsel is to fly !"
 Then Eeno† : " From his hunting-grounds
 The voice of A-ga-yen-teh falls
 Within me ! ' Brother ! ' low it sounds,
 ' Fight not where Thurenserah calls ! ' "
 On-yar-heh‡ last : " A Mohawk Brave
 You know am I, and yet"—his teeth
 He ground till foam flew forth—" beneath
 The knife of yon Ho-nont-koh slave
 Who from me stole fair Min-na-soh
 (But I 've repaid her with my blow)
 In the late strife I bleeding fell.
 Hooh ! whoop ! I will not fight !"—his yell
 High bursting forth in fiendish swell.

XLI.

" Then"—and the loud indignant tongue
 Thrilling again—" let warriors fly ;
 " I, a weak woman"—and she flung
 Her arm toward heaven and raised her eye—
 " Come Yon-non-de-yoh's scorned array,
 Beside the Sacred Flame will stay !"
 Again she tossed her arm in air,
 And the slight platform then was bare.

* " Kul-ho-an" means " Forest" in Oneida.

† " Eeno" means " Lightning" in the tongue of the Senecas.

‡ " On-yar-heh" is a " Snake" in Mohawk.

XLII.

Away the recreant warriors filed
To plunge within the neighboring wild ;
Some bending underneath their dead ;
Some with turned look and lingering tread,
As if, had not forbidden pride,
Back to their Atotarho's side
Would now have come their willing stride.

XLIII.

Sorrowing midst his Ho-nont-koh band
Bent Thurenserah, brow on hand,
Whilst stood the dark Ska-mix-heh near,
Foremost of all with scornful sneer
And jibe at their mean dastard tread,
Who from their Atotarho fled.

XLIV.

But now from the Tcar-jis-ta-yo
The Priestess stepping slow, came nigh ;
Gone was proud front and fiery eye,
Nought, nought was there but deepest woe ;
She paused at Thurenserah's side,
And placed her hand upon his head,
And in soft tones of tender pride,
" Come to thy lodge, my son !" she said.

XLV.

They entered, and her arms she pressed
Around him : " Child, my dearest child !

Thy mother loves thee now, far more
Than when thy infant form she bore
Weeping and helpless in her breast ;
How bravely"—and she fondly smiled
Upon him—"hast thou done to-day,
My own true noble child ! but still
Thou must with thy bold band away,
Though I—'tis Hah-wen-ne-yo's will,
I—Priestess of the Flame must stay."
"But Yon-non-de-yoh, mother!" low
Instant the Priestess bent her brow :
"He will not harm me ! Safely round
Will Hah-wen-ne-yo's arm be found,
Though e'en should death soon claim its prey,
'Twould come like that swift Bird of snow,
By the Great Spirit sent to say
To Hah-yoh-wont-hah, 'Come away !'
And glad, oh glad, as he I'll go—
And waiting thy loved presence there
The unfailing strawberry will prepare—
But thou must Yon-non-de-yoh flee.
He is thy deadliest enemy !
Yes, thou must flee him—thou, who late"—
She shuddered deep—"didst raise the knife
Against him, thou hast roused his hate !
Yes, thou must go, but at his life
Thou ne'er again, my child, must aim,
For"—once more dropped her eye beneath—
"Late Hah-wen-ne-yo's whispered breath
I heard whilst kneeling at the Flame.
It said, 'Ho-de-no-sonne hand

Ne'er Yon-non-de-yoh's blood shall shed ;
My arm shall deal with him !"—a brand
 Broke in the depths—the whisper fled.
Go ! but I do not say thy wrath
Shall hover not around his path,
From ambush deep the ball to wing, .
Upon his straggling young men spring,
And on them in their wearied sleep
With thy still wild-cat tread to creep ;
I might as well bid life depart
From thy Ho-de-no-sonne heart.
At night let thy unslumbering eye
 Be like the owl's ; thy feet by day
 Be like the tireless moose's way ;
And Hah-wen-ne-yo, from his sky,
Oh ! may he be for ever nigh !
And when again thy feet shall come
To thy loved On-on-dah-gah home,
Once more, she trusts, thy mother's voice
 Will glad thine ear—the Sacred Flame
 Burn bright as ever in its frame,
To bid the League again rejoice !"
She ceased—both left the lodge—and bore
Their footsteps to the band once more.

XLVI.

The other victims of the fight,
 By the deserters left, were laid
Within the burial-place—the rite
 Hasty, and short, and simple paid,

And then was every narrow mound
By the rude sorrowing emblems crowned.
Then Yu-we-lon-doh at the head,
And the sad Atotarho's tread
Heavy and oft-checked in the rear,
 Filed the Ho-nont-kohs from the scene,
 Each stepping in the other's track,
And Thurenserah paused when near
 The forest, gazed long lingering back
 On the lone mother—then between
The thronging trunks his figure light
Was hidden from her loving sight.

XLVII.

The Priestess glanced her thoughtful eye
Above, around ; within the sky
The sacred smoke was curling high ;
One pearly cloud was melting there
 Like Hah-yoh-wont-hah's white canoe,
When up, up through the summer air,
 He vanished from his people's view
Amidst the sky's triumphal strain,
Its welcome to his home again.
The sun threw soft and reddened flood
O'er huts, stockade, maize, stream and wood,
As if the expanded flame was shed
 By Hah-wen-ne-yo's kind command,
Protection o'er the scene to spread,
 From the approaching spoiler's hand ;
The river's voice was in her ear,

Seeming To-gan-a-we-tah's own,
Thus to her heart : " Thou art not lone,
True Priestess ! I am with thee here !"
She stood a moment, turned, then slow
Re-entered the Tear-jis-ta-yo.

THE SACRED FLAME.

XLVIII.

A hollow shaft of stone stood there
Upon a hearth in spaces hewed,
Hollowed beneath, through which the air
Unceasing gushed, a furnace rude.
From the barred hearth, the sacred blaze
Streamed up in broad and splendid rays ;
Before it reached the shaft, it showed
A spot that like an eye-ball glowed,
So keen, away recoiled the sight
Before the fierce and searing light.
A low deep rumble from it came,
The voice mysterious of the Flame ;
As though To-gan-a-we-tah wise,
Ere went he to his native skies,
Had left, with deep and tender care,
His warning voice for ever there.
Each Union Feast it seemed to speak
To the crouched ring of warriors near :
" Never the League, my children, break,
If Hah-wen-ne-yo's frowns ye fear :

And never let my gleaming eye,
Kindled by the red lightning first,
When on the mountain-pine it burst,
And dashed it into atoms, die !”

XLIX.

Deep to the floor her brow she bent,
A glance imploring upward sent,
And then took down her tufted mat
Passed out, and by the portal sat.
Down shed the sunshine greater strength,
The shades commenced to shrink in length,
Shut were her eyes, scarce flowed her breath,
She seemed as though reclined in death,
Not e’en the slightest muscle stirred ;
Around her tripped and searched the bird,
Leaped to her knee and then her head,
And then unscared its pinion spread ;
Still lightly rose the sacred smoke,
And in the soft wind gently broke,
And o’er her wreathed, as if to bear
Away her spirit through the air.
Noon passed—the building’s shadow deep
Began around her form to creep ;
A fresher wind allayed the heat,
The sun sent beam more mild and sweet ;
Farther the shadow stole—its trace
Was now all o’er the area’s space ;
Beside her lit the butterfly,
The sounding bee went swerveless by,

And e'en the humming-bird, most shy
Of all winged things, whizzed fearless nigh,
Until at last her raven hair
Turned golden in the sunset glare.

END OF CANTO SEVENTH.

CANTO EIGHTH.

THE MARCH.

THE MEETING.

THE MARCH.

THE MOCCASIN-

PRINT.

THE NIGHT-WATCH.

THE FAMILIES

THE FAMILIES
OF THE
FAMILIES

THE FAMILIES
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FAMILIES

CANTO EIGHTH.

THE MARCH.

I.

ON Frontenac's camp the gray morning arose,
And the drum-rattle broke on its heavy repose,
The Indian was wrenching red scalps in his dream ;
The hardy batteaman was battling the stream ;
Fame pealed in the ear of the noble her strain ;
And the pikeman was swelling his chorus again.
Up sprang the fierce Indian and felt for his knife ;
Up sprang the batteaman all armed for the strife ;
The noble donned sabre and corslet once more ;
And the pikeman again his long weapon upbore ;
The tents disappeared, and the warlike array,
In their splendor and rudeness, passed slow on their way.

II.

Strange was the sight ! rough trunks between,
Beneath fresh boughs, deep thickets through,
Musket and cuirass cast their sheen,
Mantle and flag displayed their hue.
Now on some low hemlock's cone,
Arquebuse an instant shone ;

Now against a streak of light
Glanced the uniform of white ;
And some tawny buff-coat now
Gleamed upon the streamlet's brow.
On the forest-earth were feet
Bloodiest battle-fields had beat,
And had bounded in the dance,
Midst the gay saloons of France ;
Instead of the trumpet and shout of blood,
Was the soothing peace of the quiet wood ;
Instead of rich arras and wax'd floor's gloss,
Were the fleece-like leaves and the silk-like moss ;
And instead of soft voices and footsteps gay,
Were the song of the bird, and the dance of the spray.

III.

Upon their creaking wheels the cannon rolled,
Jolting o'er roots, or sinking in the mould ;
In a carved chair behind, amidst a throng
Of nobles, Frontenac was borne along ;
Whilst in the van We-an-dah slowly went,
His deep-flushed brow upon his bosom bent.
Passed was the pine reared proudly in the air,
Whose top the eagle claimed—whose trunk the bear ;
Passed was the mining streamlet flowing deep
Beneath its alder roof with sullen creep ;
Passed were wet hollows, dry and mossy knolls,
And grassy openings set with pillared bolls ;
Passed great prone trunks with emerald coats o'erspread,
And swamps where trees stood lichen'd, gaunt and dead ;

Passed sunlit vistas reaching far away,
And glades spread broadly to the golden day;
"Onward!" shouts Frontenac, as here and there
His numbers hesitate the depths to dare;
Thus was each mile of struggling labor won;
Up to its noon arose the fervid sun,
Then it commenced the curve of its descent,
And grew more golden as it downward went;
Still on they struggled, ranks and files were lost,
And as chance willed it, strode the motely host;
The pikeman lagged amidst the speckled gloom,
And sang the vineyard melodies of home,
Whilst the grave Indian passed with stag-like stride,
Nor deigned a glance in his majestic pride.

IV.

Varied the talk the reckless bands exchanged
As through the woods in broken ranks they ranged.
"See in yon covert where those maples meet,
That startled deer! how fiercely doth he beat
With his black hoofs the earth—hark, hark, how shrill
His whistle! now he darts behind the hill.
Yon partridge by that bush, a mottled speck,
He's upon tiptoe! view him stretch his neck!
List to his startling clap! he shoots away.
Hear that black squirrel hissing on the spray!
View master hawk! what long sharp yellow claws!
He whets his beak! he's off! Those deafening caws
Tell of the crow! yes, there they swift retreat,
Warned by their sentry of our coming feet!
That snort and blow! off Bruin waddles there—

You're a strong wrestler, Merle! a chance so rare
You'll have but seldom! Head him! show your hug!
He seeks yon windfall through the hollow dug
By the tornado. Haste! or midst jammed bough
And root he'll hide! e'n so! he's vanished now!"—
"Why dost thou start thus backward, Meux? with fear!
The rattle-snake! beware! the monster's here!
Here in this nook! hark now the note he springs,
His warning, like the song the locust sings!
Ha! the coiled monster! see his tongue of flame!
His flattened head! his striped and swelling frame!
Back flies his jaw! that missile mark him strike,
Falling beside him! thrust him with thy pike!
Well done, Meux! how he darts! give thrust once more!
He sinks! he writhes! his mischief now is o'er!
Though hours he'll linger. Hark! that distant song!
It is the thrasher's thrilling thus along.
How sweet the warble! now so high its shake,
It seems its fine-drawn delicate thread will break;
Now in full ring comes on its liquid swell,
Like the rich music of some silver bell;
And now the strain drops low, yet full and round,
The listening soul dissolving with its sound!
Is it not sweet, Allaire?"

“Ah yes, Merle, yes!
How oft when eve commenced on day to press,
I from the gallery at Quebec have heard
The soft pure flute of this enchanting bird,
And thought of home upon the smiling plain
Beside the Loire, and I was young again;
My boy came bounding toward my homeward feet,

My wife was there her weary one to greet,
Whilst the low vesper bell was on the air,
And all things round me seemed to whisper prayer.
Oh then I lived in long departed years,
My eyes were filled with sad delicious tears,
And not until that woodland strain was o'er
Did the dream pass and leave me old once more !

THE MEETING.

V.

The afternoon breathed cool amidst the shades,
And sunset now was streaming through the glades.
The western leaves flashed out in golden gloss,
And sifted sprinklings on the grass and moss ;
Now the grim cannon in quick sparklings shone,
Passing some thicket densely overgrown ;
Now, where some hollow poured its slanting rays,
Gun, flag, and corslet, all were in a blaze.
On, on they pressed, but patches now of light
Gratefully cheered their gloom-accustomed sight ;
Broad glitterings through the trees, and murmurs low
Blent with the wood's hum, told a river's flow ;
And now, before, a slender thread of smoke
On the sky's rich and golden back-ground broke.
The stealthy snakelike scouts crept shrouded on,
And mutely signified the goal was won.

A brightness passed across each weary brow,
Ranks were reformed, and all was order now.
Swift they approached the opening glimmering wide,
Kun-da-qua's ripples glancing by their side.
They left the woods, the maize-fields spread their green,
An On-on-dah-gah castle there was seen.
Whoops burst out wildly from the Indian throng,
Like famished wolves they howled and leaped along,
All save We-an-dah,—with averted gaze
He crept and hid amidst the phalanx'd maize.
On through the oped gate of the palisade,
On through the lonely lanes their way they made,
Until at last they burst upon the square ;
The long high-roofed Tear-jis-ta-yo was there ;
That shrine so famed amongst the Redmen ! shrine
Which held the flame so hallowed, so divine !
Known through all tribes by legends strange and dark,
Of mystery, wonder, dread, yet hate, the mark !
On toward the porch they sprang, but who sits there
With such composed and yet majestic air !
Ta-wen-deh, leader of the savage bands,
Stops, looks, advances, stops, extends his hands.
“ Back, slave ! touch not the Priestess ! back ! ”—with awe
That rising form the startled Indians saw,
And not a weapon stirred or war-whoop rung ;
It seemed as if a spell was o'er them flung,
The mastery of the mind ; once more she spoke :
“ Lead me to Yon-non-de-yoh ! ”—just then broke
The throng for Frontenac ; she met his eye ;
He bounded from his chair with one wild cry
“ Ha ! ”—then he checked himself with effort strong ;

“Ta-wen-deh! take from hence thy warrior throng!
Guards, draw around!”—then to the Priestess turning,
“Enter!”

“Not where the sacred flame is burning!”
Grasping her arm, yet gently, then he led
Swift within Thurenserah’s lodge her tread.

VI.

“Sa-ha-wee! Can it, can it be
My loved, my long lost!”—and he threw
His arm around her passionately;
But up her slender form she drew,
And with a sternly frowning brow
Broke from his arm, and waved him back:
“Sa-ha-wee is the Priestess now;
O-nah-tah* is fierce Frontenac,
Red Yon-non-de-yoh!”—but he still
Exclaimed in tones of tenderest thrill,
“Oh do not, do not turn from me!
Long years have passed, how drear and long,
My bird! since last I heard thy song!”
And once more to his bosom he
Her form caught wildly; in his face
Sa-ha-wee looked with softening eye,
A moment stood in his embrace,
Then breathed a quick and yielding sigh,
Whilst wakened feeling on her cheek
Commenced in rising hue to speak;

“The Pine-tree” in On-on-da-gah.

And then a second rush of thought
A deeper kindlier color brought,
Although a lingering sternness yet
Within her eye the softness met.

“ But how, Sa-ha-wee ! dearest, how,
How has thou risen thus from the dead ? ”

The Priestess swept from off her brow
The long black hair across it spread,
And there displayed a deep-marked scar :

“ Ta-yo-nee’s hatchet did not slay !

But when Sa-ha-wee woke, afar

In her own lodge once more she lay
At On-on-dah-gah ; the stern mood

Of the stern brother soft was made
When by his arm he saw, in blood,

His once loved, only sister, laid.

Long were the hours ’twixt life and death

I hung ; O-nah-tah seemed to stand ”

(And a soft loving eye she now

Turned on his earnest listening brow)

“ My head oft holding with his hand,
And words of love upon his breath ;

But always, always was my child
Around—my neck her little arm

Now circling, now her kisses warm
Touching my lips as sweet she smiled.

I rose ; Ta-yo-nee by my side

Had kept a never ceasing watch

Lest other ears the tale should catch

My ravings told ; he wished to hide,

He said, my burning shame that I,
The daughter of Ska-je-ah-no,*
His sister should have fallen so low
In Yon-non-de-yoh's breast to lie
Unwedded ! I deserved to die !
He told that I had been the wife
Of a French soldier lately o'er
In the new Yon-non-de-yoh's train,
From where the last one basely bore
Myself and sire ; my husband's life
He'd watched, and him at last had slain
In our own lodge ; by accident
One of the blows his arm had dealt,
Had from my husband's head been bent,
And thus my brow the weight had felt.
All this time too within my ear,
Against thee he was whispering, till
Against my strong and struggling will,
The tall O-nah-tah, loved so late,"
(Here on his hand a kiss she pressed,
And strained it fondly to her breast,)
" To Yon-non-de-yoh changed, and fear
Chased love away, then blent with hate.
But still my child so sweet so bright,
Was never absent from my sight ;
In thought by day in dreams by night,
I saw her, and so deep my pain.
Ta-yo-nee left to pluck my flower

* "The Eagle" in the On-on-dah-gah tongue.

From hated Yon-non-de-yoh's bower ;
He brought her and I smiled again !”

“ What ! doth she live ?” in quickly broke

Here Frontenac. Sa-ha-wee's face

An instant's painful thought bore trace,

She bowed and hid it—then she spoke :

“ No, no, O-nah-tah ! she is dead !”

Frontenac bent his silvered head :

“ 'Tis as I deemed ; my scouts I sent

On every side ; but first they went

To On-on-dah-gah, for I thought

Ta-yo-nee too this deed had wrought ;

They bore back tidings he had died

In some late war-path”—

“ True, most true,

The very night that by my side

My child he placed, the war-path drew

(With Ku-an, Atotarho then)

My brother's warrior tread away

To a far Adirondack glen,

And both Braves perished in the fray !”

Frontenac's eye a moment flamed :

“ Heaven took the vengeance that I claimed ;

But let him rest in peace. No word

Of my lost little one I heard

Through thy Long House, my scouts in vain

Made search, no tidings did they gain,

Till hope at last I ceased to feel,

And the blind fruitless search gave o'er ;

Since then I've only thought Lucille,

Like thee, Sa-ha-wee, was no more.

My scouts too told me in their tale,
When at thy village ceased their trail,
It was a day of feast and glee
For the new Priestess of the Flame.
Ah! little did I deem that she
And thou, my lost one, were the same."

VII.

He ceased—and each a moment stood
In silence by deep thoughts subdued :
Then low the Priestess bent her frame,
And, taking in both hers his hand,
Exclaimed in tones of music bland,
" One boon, one boon, the Sacred Flame
Spare, spare, O-nah-tah!"
" For thy sake,
Thy sake, Sa-ha-wee!—ha! that glare,
Those whoops!"—they saw a fierce light break
O'er the dim space of twilight air,
Through the smoke-opening overhead,
And both rushed forth with startled tread.
Alas, poor Priestess! one keen glow
Wrapped thy loved shrine Tear-jis-ta-yo,
Whilst wildly round the red expanse,
Writhing in fast and frantic dance,
Ta-wen-deh and his Hurons went,
And high triumphant whoopings sent
That with the fire's loud cracklings blent;
Alas, poor Priestess! fiercely sprung
Frontenac forward, fiercely rung

His loud harsh tones : " What daring hand
Has done this deed without command ?"
The Priestess gazed—that flame so long
Watched o'er by her with love so strong,
For whose loved sake she 'd sought this hour
To save it by O-nah-tah's power,
The star to which the nations turned,
 Sign of the League ! so deeply cherished !
Which for unnumbered years had burned,
 And which she hoped would ne'er have perished.
Eye of the Long House ! kindled there
By Hah-wen-ne-yo's loving care,
To be extinguished, spurned beneath
 The feet of foes most scorned, who fled
 Before her people's very tread
Ere this—she reeled—she gasped for breath,
And, midst the wild and stunning swell
Of savage joy, she, swooning fell ;
And quick his kindling rage forgot,
Frontenac bore her from the spot,
And his old, faithful, staid Allaire
Meeting, consigned her to his care.

THE MARCH.

VIII.

Before the tent of Frontenac

Pitched in the square, the sentry Merle
Saw, striding in his weary track,

Slowly the wings of darkness furl.

The watch-fires that around him burned

Wasting to ghastlier color turned ;

The tent, bathed late in ruddy light,

Stood in its graceful folds of white ;

A crimsoned object in advance

Changed to the snowy flag of France ;

The lodges, where the whole array

(Save the disdainful Redskins) lay

In slumber, through the shimmering air

Their usual shapes commenced to wear ;

Its redly-flickering, chequering shade,

Threw off the neighboring palisade ;

Spectres, that back and forward ranged,

To brother sentinels were changed ;

The barky emblems, shapes grotesque,

Upon the mounds of burial placed,

In the wild light so picturesque,

Were in the brightness fully traced.

A shadow, wavering motions making

To the wind-moulded watch-fire's shaking.

Shrank to the drum that, near, had found

Again its native figure round,
Displaying e'en the fife within
Its ring of beaten tawny skin ;
A crimson flash that oft had shot
Into Merle's eyes as past the spot
He strode, to steely gleams turned now
Upon a breast-plate cast below ;
The bugle lying by it, slung
Upon its strap, a glitter flung ;
The casque, thrown near, keen rays flashed out ;
Dark brands of fires showed, strewed about ;
Whilst numerous figures round the square

Told that the wild men of the host,
Scorning all roof but sky, were there

In sleep, weighed down by orgies, lost.
Spots in the area's midst, deep gleaming,
Eyeballs of lurking monsters seeming
Within Merle's wandering, idle dreaming,
Mammoth or serpent terrible,

These forests' former habitants,
Of which he 'd heard the Hurons tell,
Devouring all within their haunts,
Turned to pale coals ; whilst, midst them reared,
A tall and blackened shaft appeared,
The sole memorial left to show
Where stood the shrine Tcar-jis-ta-yo.
Not this alone, but his keen eye,

Once by a shoot of scarlet light
Sent by the watch-fire, chanced to spy

A crouching figure ; through the night
He oft had thrown his curious look

Upon that black and frowning nook
Where saw he first the form, a gleam
Would now and then across it stream
And still he saw the figure there
Bent as if crushed down by despair.
No foe he deemed it, yet 'twas strange
There without motion, without change,
By the red glow which o'er would flit
He viewed that weird-like figure sit.
The dawning light disclosed at last
The drooping Priestess who, while fast
Allaire, toil-spent with marching, slept,
Away with stealthy step had crept
In her unslumbering grief to brood
Amid the wrecks around her strew'd ;
Wrecks of what lately was the frame
Of its, she thought, undying Flame,
Flame of her glory ! having place

Next Thurenserah in her heart,
Which, woe most deep ! most foul disgrace !

Had seen its last faint flash depart.
Flame of her glory ! oh, how prized !
Amidst the foes the most despised !
Never again to show its light
Unless in pity to the night,
Shrouding the Long House from his eye
Should Hah-wen-ne-yo cause to fly
The lightning as in days of yore,
And give the sacred light once more,
That would once more with sparkling power
Make summer of the winter bower,

Make daylight of the midnight hour,
With its rejoicing blaze
And gladness through the Long House shower,
As in its brightest days,
Ere treacherous counsels had prevailed,
Ere craven terror had assailed,
Or evil passions had burst out,
Scattering their awful fruits about,
Causing the Long House now to lie
In gloom beneath a gloomy sky.

IX.

Still, still the east horizon grew
More soft and clear and bright in hue ;
The clouds displayed a dappled mien ;
The forests changed from dark to green ;
Whilst in full joyous chorus there
Burst warbles on the dewy air ;
At last the clouds with light were laced,
On gold and pearl the woods were traced,
The Orient seemed of rainbows wrought,
Gold seemed across the trees to run,
And then, like some majestic thought
Kindling the brain, Merle saw the sun.

X.

As on the hill-top's loftiest pine it glowed,
The wide encampment stir and bustle showed ;
Frontenac, restless, with a picked array

Of pikes and muskets, quick his vengeful way
(The Adirondack and the Huron band,
Fiercest of all his tribes ! to aid his hand)
Was now, amidst the endless woods to push,
The Oneidas in their fastnesses to crush,
Leaving his ordnance, and remaining train
At On-on-dah-gah till he come again.

XI.

Seated within his chair of state once more
Frontenac takes his pathway as before ;
Sa-ha-wee, still the object of his care,
Near him is placed, protected by Allaire ;
The yet soft sunbeams of the morning strike
Again on moving musket, flag and pike,
And once more do the numbers onward press
Amidst the vast and solemn wilderness.

THE MOCCASIN-PRINT.

XII.

Noon's burning eye was now refulgent o'er,
Sprinkling with light the varying sylvan floor ;
The hemlock's myriad particles of green
In tiny flashes, glinted back the sheen ;
The long-leaved polished laurels to the sight
Sent rapid glances of keen dazzling light ;
The beech's moss was turned to golden fringe,

And the air's gray suffused with emerald tinge ;
The straggling numbers still their path pursued
Amidst the crowded columns of the wood,
The deep-trod trail they followed, winding, here,
Around some swamp extending wild and drear,
Bristling with tamaracks and hemlocks dead,
And with one sea of laurels overspread,
And seeming, there, some swelling ridge's back
With yawning hollows either side the track.
Unceasing on the air arose the beat,
Upon the forest earth, of trampling feet,
With rustle, brittle snap of twig, and crush
Through the dry leaves and tangled underbrush :
Shrill chirping voices, sudden whirring wings,
Told the quick flight of fleeing woodland things,
Whilst the mosquito, ever hovering near
With its fine twanging, teased the shrinking ear.
We-an-dah, near the head of the array,
With covering footstep stalked upon his way ;
His shrinking figure, and his drooping crest,
Showing he wished no eye on him to rest ;
Sorrow and conscious guilt upon his face,
In furrows sunken deep, had left their trace :
But sudden flashed his dim blank countenance,
Round him he cast a quick and furtive glance ;
A pikeman, treading near, was making bare
His forehead from his iron pot, for air ;
Another, with low-bended back had stopped
To lift the long buff gauntlet he had dropped ;
Another, making of his sword a staff,
Was joining in a fourth one's careless laugh ;

Slow, sauntering onward went a musketeer,
His huge piece slung within his bandoleer ;
Whilst a young noble, pausing at a tree,
His gorget was adjusting busily ;
The rest were hidden in the tail that wound
Its crooked way midst thickets grouped around :
He looked again on what his eye first met,
And then his moccasin upon it set,
Turned round a laurel-clump, and, bending low,
Surveyed the slope with glances keen and slow ;
Again—but 'twas a faint, a scarce-marked trace,
And nearly hid beneath a dock-leaf's face,
A moccasin's light print,—so faint, so light,
Nought but an Indian could have caught the sight,
Eagerly glanced he further down,—a brook
Its rushy way along the bottom took,
A wide leap's distance from the print, but not
Another foot-trace marked the tangled spot ;
He lifted every spreading plant, he drew
Aside each thicket, cluster, bush in view,
He lightly scooped the dead fall'n leaves away,
But nothing more did his close search repay ;
If other trace remained, with such deep care
And cunning was it hid, that in despair
We-an-dah, noted for his eye-sight keen,
Refrained his search and turned him from the scene.
Climbing once more the ridge, the eye he caught
Of Merle by passing. “ Ha ! what hast thou sought
In those thick laurels, Redskin ? I'll be bound
Fire-water cannot in those depths be found—
Here, in those never ending woods !—but look ! ”

And lifting up his buff coat-flaps, he took
From his trunk-hose a flask of blushing hue,
And held it smiling to the Indian's view ;
" What, Redskin ! dost thou turn away ? wilt not
The flagon taste ? thou ! why, We-an-dah, what,
What has got in thee, man ! that eye of thine
I've never seen with such sharp glances shine !
Thy form seems loftier too ! thy native woods
Have given thee one of thy best warrior moods !
What has got in thee, man ! I thought thy throat
Long as my pike when wine was down to float !"
Thus as the gay and reckless soldier talked,
Mute by his side We-an-dah proudly walked ;
His figure, lowly bent for many a day,
Seemed towering now, beneath the wakened sway
Of some strong feeling, whilst around his eye
In subtle glances never ceased to fly.

XIII.

Thus hours passed on, until the sinking sun
Told that the long day's march was nearly done.
They now another ridge were crossing o'er,
On either side deep hollows as before.
Sudden We-an-dah's roving eye beheld
On a steep hill, that, scarce a gunshot, swelled
Beyond the hollow on whose edge he went,
A moving object ; keener search he sent,—
A snowy feather from behind a tree
Was thrust, and then a dark face cautiously

Peered forth ; upon the bands was fixed its gaze,
Seeming with anger and disdain to blaze ;
But, as he looked, back shrank the head, and there
Again the pine-tree reared its column bare.
We-an-dah cast round furtive glance once more :
Distant, short way, a pikeman strode before,
His back-plate, casque and pikehead glancing back
Rays of keen radiance in the sunset's track ;
Another, pausing, was refitting, nigh,
The thick plume in his skull-cap jerked awry ;
Another, loud protesting he would melt,
Was loosening the broad buckle of his belt ;
Whilst Merle, low humming some familiar song,
Strode with his heavy jack-boots slow along,
Stamping his prints upon the fern and grass,
The air thus flavoring with crushed sassafras.
None heeded him, he turned a thicket near,
And down the ridge-side urged his fleet career.

THE NIGHT-WATCH.

XIV.

Night, in its earliest watch, was glowing now,
And on a lofty summit's wooded brow
The Atotarho stood : the cloudless arch
Glowed with its stars in their majestic march,
Here sketching outlines,—strewed, disordered there—
Some quick pulsating, others fixed in glare,
Whilst through the whole, in gorgeous broad array
Sprang, linked in snow-white light, the Milky Way,

XV.

As Thurenserah viewed the lovely sky,
It looked, to his wild fancy-shaping eye,
Like holy Hah-wen-ne-yo's bosom, bright
With his thick crowded deeds, one glow of light—
And his rich belt of wampum broadly bound,
White as his pure and mighty thoughts around.

XVI.

But other feelings came, and sad his view
He turned below ; there stood in glimmering hue
Frontenac's tents, whilst, flaming keen and red,
Watch-fires beneath the wood's lopped boughs were spread,
In which the pike and musket ruddy glowed,
As slow athwart each blaze the sentries strode.
Frequent loud song and careless laughter broke
From the encampment in commingled strain,
Whilst cricket, owl, and whip-poor-will awoke
The night-wood's stillness round him holding reign.
As there the frowning Indian gazed, he thought
Of all the bitter scene beneath him brought ;
Of that strange Pale-face race which, years ago,
Were seen on Cataraqui's heaving breast,
As the Great Bird with spreading wings of snow,
Bearer of grief and evil, upward pressed ;
First, creeping on the earth, with whispered words
Small in his race's ear as chirp of birds,
Then, rearing high their haughty fronts, and loud
Speaking their will, as speaks the thunder-cloud.
First, stretching trembling hands of feeblest clasp,
Extending then their pity-granted bounds,

Until they threatened, with insatiate grasp,

All, all, yes, all the Red-man's hunting grounds.

And here, oh burning, burning thought ! below

Was Yon-non-de-yoh, that detested foe !

Here, in the forest's most profound retreat !

Whilst of the host of warriors he had won

Together, this proud enemy to meet,

All but his true and brave Ho-nont-kohs gone,

And they, and he, close hiding in their fear

As from the prowling panther hides the deer.

His mother too, whose bent and weary tread

He 'd seen near Yon-non-de-yoh, captive led ;

And then, those cunning, base and treacherous arts

Which in their net had trapped his warriors' hearts.

Vile A-ga-yen-teh ! here he grimly smiled ;

We-an-dah ! clutched his fingers fierce and wild,

His tomahawk in vengeful, deadly wrath,

He whom he 'd marked throughout the livelong day,

As close he hovered round the invader's path,

Guiding, and he an Iroquois ! their way ;

Oh could his thirsty hatchet drink his blood !

But just then from a neighboring thicket sprung

A figure, and before him, cowering, stood

We-an-dah ! high his tomahawk he swung,

But still with spreading hands and head bent low,

Motionless stood his recreant chieftain there.

The Atotarho stayed the falling blow,

He could not strike at that meek, offering air,

But in his sternest tones of anger said,

“ Why comes fork-tongued We-an-dah here ? ” the Chief
Answered, but lifted not his humbled head—

“ As the last sun was pouring his hot sheaf
Of arrows from mid-sky, We-an-dah caught
A print which he the Atotarho's thought,
And keeping watch as neared the sun his grave,
Beheld the Atotarho's white plume wave
From the pine's ambush, whilst he viewed the way
That Yon-non-de-yoh took with his array.
This foot has tracked, eye dwelt on him, since then,
And when We-an-dah saw him leave the glen,
He followed to yield up his wretched life
To his wronged Atotarho's vengeful knife.”

“ We-an-dah ! ”—lowlier bent the Indian's head—

“ The Chieftain and the Warrior ! he whose whoop
Had rung so often on the war-path red,

Suffered his crouching broken soul to stoop,
The burning fire-water's slave to be ;
The crawling serpent loftier far than he ;
That made him coward, woman, when his word
Of warning fear was in thy council heard ;
We-an-dah meant not treachery ! no ! he felt
His prostrate soul within his bosom melt
With fright at Yon-non-de-yoh's numbers ! he
Spoke as he felt—he wished the Braves to flee,
To save them from the lifted arm whose blow
He thought would lay the League for ever low ;
But when they fought amongst themselves, in dread
Some knife might reach his quailing heart, he fled ;
His fiery thirst its reign claimed also o'er,
And Yon-non-de-yoh thus he joined once more.
“ But,” here he lifted up his frowning brow,
“ We-an-dah's all Ho-de-no-sonne now,

His warrior heart once more has come to him ;
His blinded eyesight is no longer dim ;
Great Atotarho, listen then ! again
Will the next sun light Yon-non-de-yoh's train,
Threading our people's forests in their pride,
We-an-dah still their seeming friend and guide.
Listen ! as shuts that sun once more his eye,

The Atotarho with his faithful band
In the ' Wolf's throat ' like lurking snakes will lie,
Hatchet, fusee, and knife in every hand ;
And when We-an-dah, Yon-non-de-yoh there
Conducts, the Atotarho's whoop in air
Will burst and pierce his ears with fiercest wrath,
Whilst glad We-an-dah by another path
Than the up-cavern's found one day by him,
Chasing a fleeing wolf, will with swift limb
Leave Yon-non-de-yoh trapped, and scale the height
To join his valiant brothers in the fight !"
Within the thicket once again he sprung,
As the last words fell rapid from his tongue ;
And slowly down the hill's opposing side
The Atotarho bent his thoughtful stride,
And plunged within the tangled glen beneath,
Where the night's silence brooded, hushed as death ;
But, as if wakened by his gliding tread,
From some black bush would rise a frequent head,
Until he reached a grape vine's arbor vast,
And there, as if for sleep, his form he cast.

END OF CANTO EIGHTH.

CANTO NINTH.

THE BATTLE.
THE TORTURE.
THE DEFIANCE.

THE DEATH.
FRONTENAC.
MASS FOR THE DEAD.



CANTO NINTH.

THE BATTLE.

I.

THE sunset was pouring its yellow flood
In a long deep glen of the boundless wood,
A precipice sought on one side the sky,
The wall on the other arose less steep
With great rocks broken, and ledges high,
With tall trees clustered and thickets deep :
'Twas the dark " Wolf's throat," and slept it still,
Nought heard but the tap of the woodpecker's bill,
And nought in the narrow vista seen
But birds in and out of their dwellings green.

II.

Now slow from a bush on the sloping side
Was thrust a savage's plumaged head ;
Along the passage his eye he sped,
And " Yu-we-lon-doh !" he quickly cried.
Another grim Indian arose from his lair,
And instantly then were uplifted in air,
From jutting rock and from hollow trunk,
From the head of the hemlock downward sunk,

From bush of cedar and mossy mound,
Scalp-locks bristling in scores around ;
The next all vanished, rock, bush, and tree,
Resuming once more their tranquillity.

III.

Next snapping of twig and careless song,
And beating of steps from a trampling throng,
Waving of feather and shining of brand,
Frontenac with his approaching band.

IV.

Through the hollow they crowding tread,
Which seems a torrent's abandoned bed,
With rock and gravel to form its floor,
And spotted with pools and thickets o'er.
Birds from the bushes loud chirping dart,
Rabbit and squirrel affrighted start ;
Save these, deep silence and solitude
Seem o'er the gloomy scene to brood.
Still in they tread, till a rocky wall
Blocks up the passage with sudden fall.

V.

At once the air is filled with cries
That from the broken steep arise,
Pealing and echoing to the skies,
 Whilst on the startled crowd,
From rock, and tree, and bush, and mound,
Comes one quick simultaneous sound ;

Though not an enemy is found ;

 All is confusion loud !

Down sinks the dying musketeer,

The pikeman stands aghast with fear,

The Indian seeks the thicket near,

But keen in every deafened ear

 The warwhoops rise once more ;

Again rock, tree, and thicket gleam,

Again the shots upon them stream,

 Again forms drop in gore ;

Frontenac's voice calls out in vain,

“Stand to your arms !”—the wildered train

Hear the stern warwhoops ring again,

And feel once more the leaden rain,

 Fall back, sway to and fro.

All gaze around, but nought they see

But rock, and bush, and bank, and tree,

Whence shoots the flame of the fusee,

And deadly balls shower fearfully ;

 No mark for aim or blow,

Save now and then a plumaged head,

A tawny arm, a legging red,

A muzzle bent, an eye of dread,

An instant seen, an instant fled,

 Ere gun or pike can bear.

Although six hundred gallant men

Were gathered in that narrow glen,

 All yielded to despair ;

Veterans of many a bloody field,

Whose creed, to mortal foe than yield

 Was with stern pride to die ;

And Redmen, burning to oppose
Their fierce hereditary foes,
With wild and craven terror shook,
And cast round many an anxious look
Where, where to hide or fly ;
Destruction seemed to hover round,
Though such their numbers, scarce was found
Room for the fall'n to lie.

VI.

Ta-wen-deh, with his eager hand
On his fusee, defying stand
Had taken, where in crowded band
Had paused his tawny host,
All cowering, as amongst them came
Death borne upon the frequent flame,
Forgotten song and boast,
When, lo ! a thicket, clustering dense
Upon the side, was scattered thence
(Planted by mocking art), and there
(Ah, treachery ! ah, treachery !)
Was grim Ska-nux-heh, pointing where
A slanting cavern opened free
A passage up the rugged steep
Then leading way with struggling leap ;
Safe from the death all round that fell,
Ta-wen-deh entered with a yell,
And echoing it with piercing swell
Each Redman leaves the fatal dell.

Following Ska-nux-heh, up they went,
The cavern's roof above them bent,
Till suddenly it ceased, and round
Ledges and trees were only found;
But still Ska-nux-heh for their guide,
They turned their bosoms to the side.
Now to the pine's great roots they clung,
Now to the elm's drooped branches hung,
Now by the hemlock up they swung,
And now from rock to rock they sprung,
Till all firm footing made ;
Then each one sought his bush and tree,
And sent the deadly bullet free
In turn upon the enemy,

Whose coverts were betrayed.
Then shrub and grass shot startled look,
Then rose plumed heads from many a nook,
Trees with descending figures shook,
Wild warriors crouching lairs forsook,
And sought each open space ;
Then closed the foes in desperate strife,
With hatchet, clubbed fusee and knife,
Fierce struggling face to face.

VII.

From the impending death relieved,
The soldiers new-born hope received,
And, shaming of their late despair,
With bracing strength they upwards bear,
Climbing the cavern high ;

The fray above fills eye and ear,
Now far—now nigh—now there—now here
 Shot, clash, and groan and cry.
Between the trees quick figures dash,
Echo fusees and hatchets flash,
 Blood pattering, falls from o'er ;
The dead and dying now and then
Roll past them downward to the glen,
 Marking their path with gore.
Still up they climbed, and now their sight
Embraced in widening scope the fight.
Here on the ground writhed, snake-like, foes ;
There face to face, exchanged they blows ;
With aimed fusee, here, crouching deep,
There, bounding on with hatchet's sweep ;
One shout for France, the air that rent,
The flushed and eager soldiers sent,
And in the furious combat blent,
O'ermatched in numbers now, and caught
In their own ambush, wildly fought
The brave Ho-nont-kohs, but for nought ;
 Hemmed in on every hand,
Each desperate effort only brought
 Thicker the knife and brand.

VIII.

At the first burst of the attack,
From his spurned chair had Frontenac
Sprung to his feet, and round, on high,
Had swept his fierce unquailing eye.

And sent his loud and stern command
Amongst his rocking, jostling band,
To brave the worst, unflinching stand.
—As still within the glen he stood,
He saw, above, a swaying throng,
Passing a broad-spread ledge along
—Bare from the usual cloak of wood,
Where pikes and blades and hatchets rose,
Darted and fell, one storm of blows ;
That instant broke the clustered strife,
And a young warrior met his sight,
Hewing his way through with hatchet and knife,
Pikemen and Indians surrounding his flight ;
Another savage beside him clung,
And fiercely his knife too and tomahawk swung ;
Foe after foe about them fell,
But pike and hatchet still barred their path,
The young Brave's struggles were terrible,
Whilst battled the other with dogged wrath ;
The face of that other met Frontenac's eye,
He started, and pointing his sword with cry,
“ We-an-dah ! base wretch ! slay the treacherous hound ! ”
Sprang toward the cavern with feeble bound,
But just then came flashing a tomahawk's blow,
On the head of We-an-dah who dropped below,
Whilst broke the young Brave with a mighty bound
From the cluster of foes that were pressing him round.
From thicket to thicket, from ledge to ledge,
Now seen and now lost, dashed the warrior free,
Leaping now from some dizzy edge,
Swinging now by some hanging tree ;

Bullets cut branches beside his head,
Hatchets whirled past him, but still he fled ;
At length through the cavern that opened at hand
Emerged the fierce savage by Frontenac's side ;
The veteran flashed at his bosom his brand,
But on, without check, went the warrior's stride :
Forward through the hollow's gloom,
Like a white bird skims his plume,—
But the foremost of those that came,
After him bounded Ska-nux-heh's frame ;
Onward, onward through the dell
Fleet the Atotarho went,
But now Ska-nux-heh's fusee was bent,
The bullet in Kah-kah's revenge was sent,
And, midst the father's triumphant yell,
The Atotarho headlong fell.

THE TORTURE.

IX.

Night was around, the moon serene
Shed o'er all objects her beautiful sheen ;
On the tents, through the boughs of the forest she beamed ;
On the weapons up-piled, and round scattered, she gleamed ;
In a small hollow, a pillared blaze
Blotted the silver with ruddy glaze ;
Scowling Hurons a stake stood round,
Where, branches piled round him, We-an-dah was bound.

X.

Hundreds were crowded to view the sight,
The buff-coat and corslet were bathed in light
Borne by the pikemen and musketeer ;
And in the radiance ruddy and clear,
The face of the wild Adirondack was keen
As he waited impatient the torture-scene ;
Whilst loftily in his chair placed high,
Frontenac sat with a gleaming eye.

XI.

Shouting and leaping the Hurons went,
Wildly and fiercely their limbs they bent ;
As each one passed he thrust his knife
 Deep in the stern We-an-dah's flesh,
Who, though all over were wounds from the strife,
 Though at each thrusting burst out afresh
In torrents the smoking and purple gore,
Unflinching, unshrinking, the torture bore.
As peeled from his body the skin in strips
The death-song rose to his scornful lips,
Rose to his lips, while his haughty eyes
Sought the pure depths of the rosy skies.

XII.

At length from the stamping circle bounded
Ta-wen-deh, head of the savage band,
Close to We-an-dah ; his whoop resounded
 As he kindled the pile with a fiery brand,

But as shot a red streak the doomed Chieftain around,
He leaped with a mighty convulsive bound,
The shrivelled thongs parted—swift forward he sprung,
From the belt of Ta-wen-deh the hatchet he tore,
One moment in air the keen weapon he swung,
And headlong the Huron fell dead in his gore.
Then, with a staggering faltering force
He cast the red hatchet ; in wavering course
It circled by Frontenac's head so near,
That he sprung from his chair with a look of fear,
Then plunging down, with his arms outspread,
Prone on his face lay We-an-dah dead.

THE DEFIANCE.

XIII.

Again rose the morn ! From the pine-top she bent
Her rich golden glory on Frontenac's tent ;
The Griffins were drooping the canvas o'er,
Two of the Guardsmen were striding before :
Within sat Frontenac ; on each hand
His leaders, arrayed with plume, mantle, and brand.
Ska-nux-heh, the traitor ! was cowering nigh,
With gratified hate in his sullen eye.
Full in Frontenac's flashing view
Thurenserah, the hapless stood,
A bandage displaying in ruddy hue,
Where the fell bullet had drank his blood

Strove he to rise to his fullest height,
Yet over his slender and graceful frame,
Swaying it with a fearful might,
Droopings and totterings frequent came.
“Wolf!” burst Frontenac out at length,
“Caught at last in thy den of strength!
Prepare to howl thy death-song now,
No more wilt thou seek me with murderous blow!
And yet”—less stern grew his gleaming eye—
“I know not, but scarce would I have thee die!
Answer! Why didst thou my young men slay?—
Why didst thou keep on thy vengeful way,
With hatchet and torch, when I wished my hand
Knit with thine own in friendship’s band?”

XIV.

The Atotarho manned his frame
And said, whilst glowed his eye with flame,
“From Yon-non-de-yoh’s lodge of pride,
The Cataraqui swift beside,
To where the birds for ever sing,
And flowers their sweets unceasing fling,
The Ongue Honwee sway the knife
Won by long years of bloody strife;
The streams our swift ka-we-yahs skim,
Our war-whoops wake the forests dim,
The vales and mountains hold our game;
And should the tribes lift hatchet red,
Their lodges melt in midnight flame,
Heaped are their war-paths with their dead,

Yet Yon-non-de-yoh to the sky
Lifts his proud front, casts round his eye,
And says, ' These hunting-grounds are mine !
And bids his deadly lightnings shine ;
Rears his stone huts within our woods,
Sends his winged pirogues o'er our floods,
And threatens in his burning wrath
To sweep e'en Corlear from his path.
Does not the panther guard his den ?

Nay, does not e'en the timid deer

Turn when the hunter comes too near ?
And shall not Thurenserah, then,
With his best blood protect the earth
Owned by his People, whence their birth ?
And did not Yon-non-de-yoh spread

In Thurenserah's path a snare,

E'en whilst the Calumet he bore ?

Sa-ha-wee too !"—a look of care
Dwelt transient on his features red,

Then grew they calm and high once more.

" And has not Yon-non-de-yoh come,

With all his warriors in array,
To Thurenserah's forest-home,

His huts to burn, his People slay ?

Where are his brave Ho-nont-kohs ! those,

Who round their Atotarho stood

When friends proved false, and threatened foes ;

Low lie they in their blood.

And Yu-we-lon-doh ! of the band

The loftiest ! in the ' Wolf's throat' too

He lies; and gone We-an-dah, who,
Midst the scorned Huron dogs upflew,
To Hah-wen-ne-yo's Spirit-land.
But yet, though Yon-non-de-yoh's knife
Points at the Atotarho's life,
Though Hah-wen-ne-yo's smiles depart,
Though storms upon his head have burst,
Up Thurenserah lifts his heart,
And proud and lofty as when first
He braved the White man's power and art,
Dares Yon-non-de-yoh do his worst!"

xv.

"Ha! speak'st thou words like these to me?"
Frontenac thundered. "Dar'st thou, slave?
Ska-nux-heh, bear him to the stake!
We'll see if there he'll tower so brave—
If flame will not his spirit break.
Haste! let us from his prate be free!"

THE DEATH.

xvi.

In a green opening by Frontenac's tent,
Circling a stake, in their varied mien,
Again was the throng of the army blent,
Seemingly waiting a coming scene.

Suddenly shrill whoops rent the sky,
And midst an advancing Indian host,
The Atotarho met each eye,
Treading in majesty toward the post.
Beside him Ska-nux-heh, the bloody, came
With a pine-torch flaring in smoky flame ;
Louder and louder the whoops pealed out,
Wildly flashed hatchets and knives about,
But calmly his way Thurenserah took,
Forward he gazed with a steadfast look,
That look from all traces of passion exempt,
Save that of freezing and lofty contempt,
Trampling beneath e'en the weakness and pain,
So late before Frontenac claiming their reign.

XVII.

Now to the stake is bound his waist,
Leaves and branches are round him placed ;
Then as ceases the whooping din,
Ska-nux-heh's revilings and taunts begin.
"Kooh ! dog and coward ! he fears to die !
He cannot look in a warrior's eye !
Kooh ! trembling deer ! when he comes to his pain,
His moans will echo, tears fall like rain !
That the great Atotarho ! shame !
I see but a coward who fears the flame !
That Thurenserah proud and high !
I see but a coward who fears to die !"

XVIII.

Down in disdain the young warrior gazed,
At first on Ska-nux-heh ; his brow then he raised,
As if lifting his soul o'er the jeer and the taunt,
And from the bright hunting-grounds waiting him, he
Was scenting the feast of the strawberry,
And forth rushed his death-song in rapturous chaunt ;
Ringing more loud, as his foe more fierce
Hurled his scorn, till Ska-nux-heh pressed,
Close to his victim, to tear from his breast
The close white robe, that his knife might pierce
The naked flesh e'er he kindled the fire,
Where the proud Atotarho was doomed to expire.

XIX.

Forward across his tent and back,
With hurried stride went Frontenac.
Deepest determination now
Was seated on his frowning brow ;
Doubt wavered then within his eye—
“ So young, so gallant ! thus to die !
And yet ! ”—his face again grew stern,
Until it worked with passion's strife—
“ Did not his hatchet seek my life ?
Did it not strike down young Lavergne ?
And ”—here his wrinkled brow was fraught
With weblike lines of crafty thought—
“ Daring and wise ! he 's formed to lead

The Iroquois to greatest deed ;
Escaping now, he 'll tread some hour
Upon my neck to loftiest power.
He dies !"—Just then a figure dashed
Within the tent, "Sa-ha-wee !"—wild
Her starting eyeballs on him flashed.

"Fly ! save her ! haste ! my child ! our child !
O-nah-tah, hear'st thou ! ours ! she dies !"—

"Who, who, Sa-ha-wee !"—

"She ! Lucille !—

The Atotarho !" Shrill her cries
On his bewildered senses peal.
"Lucille ! the Atotarho ! quick,
Explain—quick, woman !"—

From her tongue

The rapid words in torrents sprung,
Although with anguish hoarse and thick,
Whilst at his feet her form she flung ;

"When Ku-an—Atotarho—fell,
Had not Ta-yo-nee died as well,
He would the dignity have worn

By our law's course, and next, my child,
Had she—thou hear'st—a son been born ;

A thought flashed o'er me quick and wild !
When came Ta-yo-nee with her, night

Wrapped all, none saw, her life knew none,
And at first tidings of the death

Of him and Ku-an, with loud breath
From the Tear-jis-ta-yo's dread height,
As Priestess, armed thus in my might,

Her life I told but as a son,

All their young Atotarho hailed,
The Union Feast approved the claim,
And whilst his boyish years prevailed,
Bade Sken-an-do-ah bear the name ;
Still stand'st thou here to see her die !
Fly ! on my knees I ask it ! fly !"—
" Woman ! thou told'st me she was dead !"—
" I did ! my secret still to keep !"—
Bewilderment, amazement deep,
Yet Frontenac's pale visage spread.
" Knows she, Sa-ha-wee, I 'm her sire ?"
" No ! like the League she only knew
Her father in the Paleface Brave,
In his false tale Ta-yo-nee slew—
Haste, haste, they 'll kindle soon the fire ;
Will not his child a father save ?
Fly, fly ! O-nah-tah ! fly !"—

A shout
Broke just then from the crowd without—
A shout of wonder wild—he sprung,
The tent's front folds he open flung,
There, Heavenly Powers ! St Francis ! there !
There, with a woman's breast made bare
By the recoiled Ska-nux-heh's hands,
The mighty Atotarho stands,
Stands with a shrinking drooping frame,
As if crushed down with deepest shame ;
But as looked Frontenac, like thought
Lucille leaned forward, stretched her arm,
The torch from froze Ska-nux-heh caught

And fired the pile ; in mad alarm
Forward the father leaped with cry
Of "pluck him thence !" yelled shrill and high,
"Ho ! pluck him thence !" his hair streams out,
His arms he stretches,—but the shout
None of the crowd wild-rocking hears ;

All is confusion clamorous there,
Eyes forward fixed, tongues rending air,
The fires dread crackling fills his ears,
And on he struggles, "pluck him thence !"

None heed, obey none, still he calls,
Till darkness sweeps o'er every sense,
And, fainting, midst the throng he falls.
A form springs past with frantic force,
Through the dense crowd it cleaves its course.
"The Priestess !" on—down gleams her knife,
Ska-nux-heh yields his groaning life ;
Into the fire she dashes now,

And, nerved with all her mad despair,
One flashing wreath around her brow,

Around her form one blazing glare,
She breaks from out the scattered flame,
And forth she drags a blackened frame
Which, staggering wildly to its knee,

An arm throws proudly to the skies,
Sounds a low war-whoop brokenly,

Then drops and, struggling faintly, dies.
Turned into stone, with frenzied gaze,
The talons of the ravenous blaze
Keen in her flesh, the Priestess kneels

Beside her child, a shriek then peals,
A shriek of agony, so shrill,
It made the hearts all round her thrill,
Then swift as light, her knife she sheathed
 Within her breast, her blood gushed red,
And as "I come, Lucille!" she breathed,
 She fell across her daughter, dead.

FRONTENAC.

XX.

Years, alas ! how fast they fly !
April's clouds along the sky !
Bubbles on the gliding stream !
Dyes that in the rainbow gleam !
Leaves that autumn's tempests sever !
Thus they fly, and fly for ever !

XXI.

Five rapid years have passed away,
 And on Quebec's embattled height
The sunset sleeps with mellow ray,
 Making the mountain soft and bright.
Rich rose is on Cape Diamond's head,
Glints, here and there, the river's bed,
While to the voyageur's rude eye,
 Paddling along his birch canoe,

A streak of silver, curving high
The gold enamelled foliage through,
Tells the tall Montmorenci's leap
From its sunk valley down the steep.

XXII.

The wide Place d'Armes in shade was cast,
And on it was a concourse vast.
Batteauman, hunter, coureur, scout,
Noble and monk, were grouped about,
Whispering and pale as if in fear
That some calamity was near.

"He's dying, Merle!" with sorrowing air
The young Carignan Pierre said low,
"How know'st thou?"

"The old Guard Allaire

Told me a brief half-hour ago!"

"Has he not seemed to waste away,
Since the strange dreadful scene that day
Down in the On-on-dah-gah woods?"

"Yes! all through those grim solitudes
Haggard his visage was and wild,
And since that hour he's never smiled.
Well, mainly he's been just and good,
Though fierce and hasty in his mood;
The Holy Virgin waft his soul
Up to its pure and happy goal!"

"Hark!" just then came a deep stern swell

Along the air, a heavy clang:
It was the Castle's giant bell,

And loud, slow, startling tolls it rang.
Clang, clang again—clang, clang again—
It seemed to strike to every brain,
The low vibrating hum between
Quivering along the awe-struck scene.
Stirred by one impulse stood the crowd
With brow uncovered, shoulders bowed ;
They knew the tale that solemn bell,
The sorrowing tale 'twas swung to tell ;
Quebec rang out in every street,
Cape Diamond back the volume beat,
The walls spoke forth in deep rebound,
The river's breast returned the sound ;
It needed not that gray Allaire,
With trembling voice and bended head,
Should from the sally-port declare
That noble Frontenac was dead.

MASS FOR THE DEAD.

XXIII.

Sunset again o'er Quebec
Spread like a gorgeous pall ;
Again does its rich glowing loveliness deck
River, and castle, and wall.
Follows the twilight haze,
And now the star-gemmed night ;

And outbursts the Recollets' church in a blaze
Of glittering spangling light.
Crowds in the spacious pile
Are thronging the aisles and nave,
With soldiers from altar to porch, in file,
All motionless, mute, and grave.
Censers are swinging around,
Wax-lights are shedding their glare,
And, rolling majestic its volume of sound,
The organ oppresses the air.
The saint within its niche,
Pillar, and picture, and cross,
And the roof in its soaring and stately pitch
Are gleaming in golden gloss.
The chorister's sorrowing strain
Sounds shrill as the winter breeze,
Then low and soothing, as when complain
Soft airs in the summer trees.
The taper-starred altar before,
Deep mantled in mourning black,
With sabre and plume on the pall spread o'er,
Is the coffin of Frontenac.
Around it the nobles are bowed,
And near are the guards in their grief,
Whilst the sweet-breathing incense is wreathing its cloud
Over the motionless chief.
But the organ and singer have ceased,
Leaving a void in air,
And the long-drawn chaunt of the blazon'd priest
Rises in supplianee there.
Again the deep organ shakes

The walls with its mighty tone,
And through it again the sweet melody breaks
Like a sorrowful spirit's moan.
A sudden silence now ;
Each knee has sought the floor ;
The priest breathes his blessing with upturn'd brow,
And the requiem is o'er.

END OF CANTO NINTH.



NOTES.



NOTES.

CANTO FIRST.

STANZA I.

" 'Twas in June's bright and glowing prime,
The loveliest of the summer time.
The laurels were one splendid sheet
Of crowded blossom everywhere ;
The locust's clustered pearl was sweet,
And the tall whitewood made the air
Delicious with the fragrance shed
From the gold flowers all o'er it spread."

The appearance of the American forests in June is truly magnificent. The fresh leaves are so closely set, and are so bright in hue, as to cause the branches to look as if clothed in an emerald fleece. The laurel thickets are one sheet of superb blossom, whilst the locust and the whitewood display their white and yellow flowers in unison with the dogwood, linden, and chestnut, as if the wood genii had scattered gigantic bouquets among the green summits.

STANZA II.

" In the rich pomp of dying day
Quebec, the rock-throned monarch, glowed."

" Quebec is from ' Quebeio,' which in the Algonquin language signifies ' contraction.' "—*Charlevoix's New France.*

“The batteries rude that niched their way
Along the cliff.”

The fortifications of Quebec at this period of our tale (1672) were very incomplete, consisting of batteries scattered along the edges and inequalities of the cliff, with here and there palisades between, and embankments of earth and stone upon the landward end of the town.

“Beyond, the sweet and mellow smile
Beamed upon Orleans’ lovely isle ;
Until the downward view
Was closed by mountain-tops that, reared
Against the burnished sky, appeared
In misty dreamy hue.”

“The river itself (the St. Lawrence) which is between five and six miles wide, visible as far as the distant end of the Island of Orleans, where it loses itself amidst the mountains that bound it on each side, is one of the most beautiful objects in nature.”—*Weld’s Travels in North America.*

STANZA XIX.

“Reared on the cliff, at the very brink,
Whence a pebble dropped would sink
Four-score feet to the slope below,
The Castle of St. Louis caught.”

The Castle of St. Louis was built upon the edge of a rock which fell sheer down for about eighty feet, and then sloped more gradually until within a short distance of the river side. The narrow strip of level ground immediately along the river, was in line with the rock, scattered with huts and cabins of a rude description.

STANZA XX.

“Opposite, in the soft warm light
 The Recollets’ steeple glittered bright ;
 And tipped with gold was the Convent by,
 Whilst both threw a mantle of raven dye
 The broad Place d’Armes across,
 That up to the massive curtain lay.”

“The fortress of St. Louis covered about four acres of ground, and formed nearly a parallelogram ; on the western side, two strong bastions on each angle were connected by a curtain in the centre of which was a sallyport.”—*Bouchette’s Canada*.

The Castle of St. Louis stood within this fortress. “Care should be taken,” says Hawkins, in his *Picture of Quebec*, “to distinguish between the *castle* and the *fortress* of St. Louis.”

“Twenty paces further we arrive at two pretty large squares or openings. That on the left is the Place d’Armes, which is before the castle where the Governor-General resides. The Recollets are opposite.”—*Charlevoix’s Description of Quebec in 1711*.

“The Recollets’ Church is opposite the gate of the palace on the west side, looks well, and has a pretty high-pointed steeple.”—*Kalm’s Travels in North America*.

Both these authors wrote some time after the periods of our tale, and probably the curtain and bastions which composed the fort were removed before their visits.

“Immediately in front of the castle was an esplanade or open space still called the Place d’Armes, on one side of which stood the church and convent of the Recollets.”—*Hawkins’ Picture of Quebec*.

STANZA XXII.

“Wampum in varied colors strung.”

“Belts of wampum are made of shells found on the coasts of

New England and Virginia, which are sawed out into beads of an oblong form about a quarter of an inch long, and round like other beads. Being strung on leather strips, and several of them sewed neatly together with fine sinewy threads, they then compose what is termed a belt of wampum.”—*Carver's Travels*.

STANZA XXIV.

“The Iroquois in their dread and might
Stood frowning in his mental sight.”

“The name of ‘Iroquois’ is purely French, and has been formed from the term ‘Hiro’ or ‘Hero’ which signifies ‘I have said,’ and by which these savages terminate their discourse, as the Latins sometimes did by their ‘dixi;’ and from ‘Kouê,’ which is a cry as well of distress when it is pronounced long, as also of joy when they pronounce it shorter.”—*Histoire et Description de la Nouvelle France, par le P. De Charlevoix*.

“Nought in the woods now their might could oppose,
Nought could withstand their confederate blows;
Banded in strength and united in soul,
They moved on their course with the cataract's roll.”

The Iroquois were formerly separate nations, and for a long time not only warred amongst themselves, but were driven from point to point by their common enemies, the Adirondacks, the Hurons, &c. They at length, however, for the purpose of healing their own dissensions and to protect themselves against their enemies, formed themselves into a League or Confederacy. By thus concentrating their power, they were not only enabled successfully to resist aggression, but to drive, in their turn, their enemies before them, the fire-arms given them by the Dutch assisting them materially in so doing. When this League was formed is uncertain.

"Pyrlaus, a Missionary at the ancient site of Dionderoga or Fort Hunter, writing between 1742 and 1748, states," says Schoolcraft in his Notes on the Iroquois, "as the result of the best conjectures he could form, from information derived from the Mohawks, that the Alliance took place 'one age' or the length of a man's life, before the White people came into the country. Taking 1609, the era of the Dutch discovery, and estimating 'a man's life' by the patriarchal and scriptural rule, we should not, at the utmost, have a more remote date than 1539, as the origin of the Confederacy."

STANZA XXV.

"Wherever the banner of France was reared,
The blood-thirsty hate of the Braves appeared;
Kindled against Champlain when first
His lightning death on their sires had burst."

"The progress of its (Quebec's) aggrandisement was slow, for the new settlers, and indeed Champlain at their head, were not only so impolitic as to encourage the prosecution of hostilities between the two neighboring nations of Algonquins (Adirondacks) and Iroquois, but even to join the former against the latter. This interference drew upon the French the hatred of the powerful Iroquois, and was the means of involving the whole colony in a long and most destructive warfare, which at an early period rendered some defensive fortifications necessary to protect Quebec from the enmity of her new but implacable enemies."—*Bouchette's Canada*.

STANZA XXIX.

"A captive brought to the shores of France
By noble De Tracy with her sire."

The Governors-General of Canada were accustomed in those

days to send or take with them as captives to France, those of the native race who had fallen into their hands.—See the Histories of the period.

CANTO SECOND.

STANZA II.

“Their Long House extended now, spacious and high,
The branches its rafters, its canopy sky,
From Co-ha-ta-te-yah’s full oceanward bed,
To where its great bosom Ontario spread.”

The term “Long House” was used by the Iroquois symbolically, to denote the League they had formed, and also to describe the continuity of their possessions or territory. The Long House was constantly alluded to by their orators, and also in conversation amongst themselves.

“To the League which was formed on the banks of Onondaga Lake,” says Schoolcraft in his Notes on the Iroquois, “they in time gave the name of the Long House, using the term symbolically, to denote that they were tied and braced together by blood and lineage as well as political bonds. This House, agreeably to the allusion so often made by their speakers during our Colonial history, reached from the banks of the Hudson to the Lakes.”

“The fierce Adirondacks had fled from their wrath,
The Hurons been swept from their merciless path.”

“The Iroquois, after they confederated, drove the Adirondacks from their ancient hunting-grounds around Quebec, and under its walls defeated the Hurons in a dreadful battle beneath the very

eyes of the French, who dared not leave the protection of their embankments to assist their allies. They destroyed the nation called the Eries on the borders of the vast lake known by their name. They made the Ottawas abandon their river, humbled the Lenni Lenape or Delawares, once strong and powerful, to such an extent as to force them to declare themselves women, and place themselves under the protection of their haughty conquerors, and at last carried the terror of their arms even amongst the distant Illini, Pequods, and even Cherokees."—See *Colden's History of the Five Nations*, *Schoolcraft's Notes on the Iroquois*, and other Histories of the time.

"By the far Mississippi, the Illini shrank
When the trail of the TORTOISE was seen on the bank;
On the hills of New England the Pequod turned pale,
When the howl of the WOLF swelled at night on the gale;
And the Cherokee shook in his green-smiling bowers,
When the foot of the BEAR stamped his carpet of flowers."

"Each of these nations (the Five Nations or Iroquois) is divided again into three tribes or families, who distinguish themselves by three different arms or ensigns—the TORTOISE, the WOLF, and the BEAR."—*Colden's History of the Five Nations*. (They are called the Five Nations by the English, and the Iroquois by the French.)

There were five other totems than those mentioned by Colden, but these three were the most ancient and the highest in rank, the totem of the TORTOISE being the highest of all, on account of the belief of the Iroquois that the earth rested on the back of a tortoise.

The order of the eight totems resembled somewhat that of the tribes of Israel, amongst which the tribes of Benjamin and Judah occupied the highest grade.

"They (the Five Nations) carried their arms as far south as

Carolina, to the northward of New England, and as far west as the river Mississippi, over a vast country which extends twelve hundred miles in length from north to south, and about six hundred miles in breadth, where they entirely destroyed many nations, of whom there are now no accounts remaining among the English.”
—*Colden's History of the Five Nations.*

STANZA V.

“The League's Atotarho.”

The Atotarho is the head chief of the Iroquois. The history of this rulership is as follows:—Just before the formation of the Confederacy, a most extraordinary and formidable warrior was heard of amongst the Onondagas. Living serpents composed the hairs of his head, which so entangled and knotted themselves up in their motions, that he acquired the name of “Atotarho,” meaning “entangled.” Not only was his head a mass of writhing reptiles, but his fingers and toes were terminated by them, hissing and launching out their tongues perpetually. So dreadful was his aspect that the very sight of him caused instant death. When the two other projectors of the Alliance, however, visited him, protected by Hah-we-ne-yo in their divine mission, they approached and divested him of his snaky trappings, unharmed. At the completion of the Alliance he was made Grand Sachem of the Confederacy, his two brethren supernaturally disappearing. He still preserved the name of Atotarho, and when he died his name and office were continued. A long line of Atotarhos thus succeeded, extending down in a regular chain to the present day.

STANZA VI.

“’Twas May! the Spring with magic bloom
Leaped up from Winter's frozen tomb.”

“Scarcely is the ground cleared of snow in Canada, when vege-

tation breaks forth, not gradually as with us, but with almost preternatural rapidity."—*Murray's British America*.

"The yacht, that stood with naked mast."

The yacht was a species of vessel much used in the rivers and lakes of Canada at that period, and frequently mentioned by the old writers. It had one high mast, and much resembled the sloops that ply on the Hudson and other rivers in the United States.

"The brown rossignol's carol shrill."

This is one of the earliest, if not the earliest, Spring bird in Canada. It is of a brown color, and sings sweetly.

"He saw the coltsfoot's golden head."

"The coltsfoot is the first flower of Spring. It is a low, yellow, syngenesious flower, much resembling the dandelion."—*Gosse's Canadian Naturalist*.

STANZA VIII.

"The Huron runner of Lorette."

The Hurons of Lorette were the fast allies of the French, and resided in the little village of Lorette a few miles from Quebec. A runner was a messenger, and selected for his speed of foot and endurance of hunger and fatigue. These runners would frequently travel from a hundred to a hundred and thirty miles between sun and sun.

"Holding a wampum belt in sight,
Of braided colors black and white."

"Wampum is of several colors, but the black and white are

chiefly used. Those given to Sir William Johnson were in several rows, black on each side and white in the middle; the white being placed in the centre was to express peace, and that the path between them was fair and open."—*Long's Travels*.

"That Yon-non-de-yoh asks a talk."

Yon-non-de-yoh was the name given by the Iroquois to the Governor-General of Canada. Hennepin says it signifies "a fine mountain."

"The tree of Peace between to set."

"The tree of Peace is a symbolic metaphor for Peace itself."—*La Hontan*.

STANZA X.

"Along the Castle's beaten square."

The Indian villages are called Castles by the old writers. "Their Castles," says Colden, "are generally a square surrounded with palisadoes without any bastions or outworks."

"The dread, renowned Tcar-jis-ta-yo
Extended its long log-built frame."

This is an Onondaga word signifying "The House of the Sacred Flame."

"Shrining within the Sacred Flame
Which burned with never-ceasing glow."

The Onondaga Canton was the central one of the Five Cantons

of the Iroquois. This Canton, from its position, was the place of the general council fire, a seat of government of the nations. The Castle or village in Onondaga Hollow was the particular spot of this council fire. Here it was kept, according to the histories of the period "continually burning." This was probably a metaphorical term to show the perpetuity of the League, but I have chosen, for poetical purposes, to consider it literal. I am justified in this by the fact that amongst the Chippewayans there was a fire kept perpetually burning, answering somewhat to the vestal fire of the Romans, and also that the Natches nation preserved a continual fire in their sacred temple.

"The Feast of Union every year
Renewing by the radiance clear
The tie in each confederate's heart."

"The Feast of Union is a term used by the Iroquois to signify the renewing of the alliance between the five Iroquois nations. Every year the five Cantons send deputies to assist at the Union Feast, and to smoke in the great Calumet or pipe of the five nations."—*La Hontan*.

STANZA XV.

"Once every year a glowing brand,
Whose sparkles from the Flame had birth,
Was borne by To-ne-sah-hah's hand
To every On-on-dah-gah hearth."

It was a striking peculiarity of the ancient religious system of the Iroquois that once a year the priesthood supplied the people with sacred fire. "For this purpose, a set time was announced for the ruling Priest's visit. The entire village was apprised of this visit, and the master of each lodge was expected to be prepared for this annual rite. Preliminary to the visit, his lodge fire was

carefully put out, and ashes scattered about it."—*Schoolcraft's Notes on the Iroquois.*

“ the brand made red
By the whirled wheel.”

The mode, as I was informed by a Cayuga Sachem, of supplying fire, was by means of a wheel turned rapidly round.

STANZA XVII.

“ White as the snow the lake-marsh shed.”

The salt marshes of the Onondaga lake, white with the crystallised salt.

STANZA XVIII.

“ His own rich pipe was hung below,
Its bowl and stem one general glow ;
With thickly pictured tints of red,
Telling of actions stern and dread.”

The Iroquois warriors covered their garments, pipes, bows, and tomahawks with the emblems or representations of their deeds on the war-path. These were stained red, that being the favorite war color.

“ Broad sinewed snow-shoes ; girdles blue.”

The snow-shoes which the Savages used, were calculated to bear their weight on the deep snows of a northern winter, when chasing their game.

The girdle, or waistcloth, was a strip of cloth or skin, twined around their loins, and used by the warriors both on their war-paths and in their villages.

When made of cloth they were generally of a blue color.

“ Whilst from the floor a sapling sprung,
With human scalps upon it strung.”

It was the custom of the Iroquois to plant a long pole in their lodges, and string upon it the scalps they had taken in the war-path.

STANZA XXIII,

“ Whene’er he struck the battle-post,
She hung delighted on his boast.”

The Iroquois warrior on the eve of an expedition always danced his war-dance around the war-post, boasting of his exploits, and striking at the same time the post with his tomahawk or war-club.

STANZA XXVII.

“ Upon the pleasant outside green,
Two shouting bands, the gates between,
With their broad rackets sent on high
The ball now soaring to the sky.”

Ball-playing was a favorite pastime amongst the Iroquois.

They played with rackets (which resembled the tennis rackets or the battledoors of the whites, only larger), fixing two sticks upright in the earth several inches apart, and then planting similar ones five or six hundred paces opposite. These were called gates. The art of the play consisted in keeping the ball by the aid of the rackets continually in the air, and if it passed or fell beyond the gates, the party or band whose duty it was to keep it within, lost the play.

STANZA XXVIII.

“ Here through the alleys warriors bore
Short scarlet cloaks their shoulders o’er.”

“ Both the young and the old hang upon their backs, in a careless way, a covering of hide or scarlet, when they go abroad to walk or make visits.”—*La Hontan*.

STANZA XXXVIII.

“ A guttural quick ‘yo-hah!’ awoke
From the dark ring.”

“ ‘Yo-hah!’ denotes approbation, being a loud shout or cry consisting of a few notes pronounced by the Indians, in the nature of our huzzas.”—*Colden’s History of the Five Nations*.

STANZA XXXIX.

“ Thence to the Castle roof descended,
And bathed in radiance pure and deep
The spires and dwellings of the steep.
Still downward crept the strengthening rays;
The lofty crowded roofs below.”

“ Quebec is divided into the upper and lower city. The merchants live in the latter for the conveniency of the harbor, upon which they have built very fine houses three stories high, of a sort of stone that is hard as marble. The upper or high city is full as populous and well adorned as the lower. Both cities are commanded by a castle that stands upon the highest ground. The castle is the residence of the governors.”—*La Hontan’s Description of Quebec in 1684*.

“ And Cataraqui caught the glow.”

Cataraqui was the Iroquois name for the River St. Lawrence.

“ The scattered bastions—walls of stone
With bristling lines of cannon crowned.”

“ A little above the bastion on the right, they have made a bastion in the rock. There is a little square fort still above this called the citadel. From the angle of the citadel they have made an *Orielle* of a bastion, from whence they have made a curtain at right angles.”—*Charlevoix's Description*.

“ As the place (Quebec) obtained consequence, and became an object of desire to other and far more powerful enemies than the native savages, it was in the last mentioned year (1691) fortified in a more regular manner by works according to the rules of Art, built of stone, which from that period have been attended to.”—*Bouchette's Canada*.

“ The basin glowed in splendid dyes.”

“ The wide part of the river immediately below Quebec is called the basin.”—*Weld's Travels in Canada*.

“ And chequered tints of light and shade
The banks of Orleans' Isle displayed.”

“ The Island of Orleans is seven leagues in length, and three in breadth. It is surrounded with plantations that produce all sorts of grain.”—*La Hontan*.

STANZA XL.

“ A brigantine her canvas spread,
And as her sailor-songs outbroke
Down toward the southern channel sped.”

“ A brigantine is a small vessel with one deck, built of light

wood, which plies both with oars and sails. It is equally sharp at bow and poop, and is built for a quick sailer.—*La Hontan*.

“At Quebec the river divides itself into two branches. The ships sail through the South Channel, for the North Channel is so foul with shelves and rocks, that the small boats can only pass that way.”—*La Hontan*.

“From Skannadario’s boundless blue.”

“Skannadario was the Iroquois name for Lake Ontario, meaning ‘a very pretty lake.’”—See *Hennepin*.

“And a batteau forth slowly slipped
Its little wooden anchors tripped,
The boatmen at their poles low bending.”

The batteau was a long flat boat sharp at both ends, used to transport heavy articles along the rivers and shores of the lakes. They were propelled by long poles, against which the boatmen placed their shoulders and pushed with all their strength. In smooth deep places they used oars, and in the broad breezy reaches hoisted a sail.

“About midnight we weighed our little wooden anchors, and one half the men rowed, whilst the others were at rest.”—*La Hontan*.

STANZA XLI.

“With pike and corslet, grim and scarred,
And measured step, on strode a guard.”

Frontenac had a body of soldiers who were immediately armed around his person, called his “guards.” “Count Frontenac,” says Hennepin, “gave me two of his guards, who understood very well how to manage a canoe, to carry me to Quebec.” *La Hontan* also mentions them.

“Coureurs de bois loud chattering went,
Beneath their packs of peltry bent.”

“Coureurs de Bois, *i. e.* Forest Rangers, are French or Canadese; so called from employing their whole life in the rough exercise of transporting merchandise goods to the lakes of Canada, and to all the other nations of the Continent in order to trade with the savages.” They exchanged their goods for beaver skins, and ran in canoes hundreds of leagues up the rivers and lakes of the country.—See *La Hontan*.

“The half-blood scout, with footstep light,
Passed, glancing round his rapid sight.”

Scouts were much employed by the French at that period to track the forest. They were generally half-breeds.

“And rough batteaumen, grouped in bands.”

The batteaumen constituted, as well as the Coureurs de Bois, a distinct class by themselves. They associated together, and were rude in speech and manner.

STANZA XLII.

“‘St. Francis! keep it far away,’
Exclaimed a passing Recollet.”

The Recollets were monks of the order of St. Francis. They were the first Priests that settled in Canada, and were employed as Missionaries generally amongst the Indians.—See *Hennepin*, who belonged himself to the Order.

“A rough Carignan settler said.”

“The Carignan Salières were a French regiment which on its return from Hungary, was sent to Canada to make war against the

Iroquois, and the greater part of the regiment, after the war, remained in the country and became settlers.”—*Charlevoix's Nouvelle France*.

The descendants of this regiment were ever afterwards, and are to this day, called Carignans.

“Hush, Merle, the Calumet behold!”

“The savages make use of the Calumet for negotiations, and state affairs; for when they have a Calumet in their hand they go where they will in safety.”—*La Hontan*.

“One with the Calumet may venture amongst his enemies.—*Marquette*.

It was, in fact, the Indian's flag of truce.

“Passed crouching hut and building grey.”

Quebec in 1696 (the time of the greater portion of our tale) consisted of houses built of grey stone, interspersed with the sheds and cabins of the fur-traders, hunters, &c. &c.

STANZA XLIII.

“On came the Atotarho's tread,
Leading the file of his tawny band.”

The Indians always march in single file, so as to tread in each other's footprint, and thereby conceal their numbers, and also their trail as much as possible.

“Whilst high he lifted in his hand
That sign of peace, the Calumet,
So sacred to the Indian soul,
With its stem of reed, and its dark red bowl,
Flaunting with feathers, white, yellow, and green.”

“I must here speak of the Calumet, the most mysterious thing

in the world. The sceptres of our kings are not so much respected, for the savages have such a deference for this pipe that we may call it the god of peace and war, and the arbiter of life and death. They adorn it with feathers of several colors."—*Marquette*.

"The head is finely polished; and the quill, which is commonly two feet and a half long, is made of a pretty strong reed. They tie to it two wings of the most curious birds they find."—*Hennepin*.

"The red Calumets are most esteemed. It is trimmed with white, yellow, and green feathers, and has the same effect amongst the savages that the flag of friendship has with us; for to violate the rights of this venerable pipe is amongst them a flaming crime."—*La Hontan*.

The Calumet is a large smoking-pipe made of marble, most commonly of dark red."—*Colden*.

STANZA XLIV.

"A short fusee his shoulders crossed."

"Short and light fusees are in use amongst the savages."—*La Hontan*.

"His head the bristling scalp-lock bore."

"The Indian warrior shaves his head, with the exception of a long lock upon the crown, to facilitate the taking the scalp, should he fall into the power of his enemy.

"A heron plume of snow hung o'er,
(Memorial of that bird that swept
Its way to Hah-yoh-wont-hah dread,
And whose pure plumage long was kept
To deck each bravest warrior's head.")

Hah-yoh-wont-hah was one of the three projectors and makers of the League, or Confederation, of the Iroquois. The other two

were Atotarho and To-gan-a-we-tah. The three were considered of preternatural origin, and possessed of preternatural qualities. Hah-yoh-wont-hah, however, had dwelt long amongst them, choosing the Onondagas for his nation, and Onondaga Lake for his residence. Here he married and had a daughter, who was regarded almost as divine. He instructed his people in the arts of hunting, agriculture, and war, was deeply venerated, and at last proposed, with the two others, the Alliance. Whilst standing in the midst of the assemblage of the Five Nations which was congregated on the shores of the lake to join in the League, with his daughter by his side, a rushing sound was heard, and a great white bird swooped from the heavens and fell at the side of Han-yoh-wont-hah, crushing his daughter in its fall. The warriors around him rushed to pluck the plumes from the wings of the bird to place by their scalp-locks, and the feathers were preserved afterwards to adorn the heads of the most valiant warriors of the Confederacy. When these feathers became destroyed the plumes of the white heron supplied their places. In process of time, the Atotarho alone acquired the right to wear the white heron plume, in his capacity of head Sachem, as well as head War-chief of the Confederacy.

The name of this bird was "Sah-dah-ga-ah" in Seneca, and Hah-googhs" in Onondaga. The meaning in both dialects is "the bird of the clouds."

"Behind, his mat hung, richly dyed."

The Iroquois warrior always hung his mat, stained with rich colors, at his back when equipped fully for his "talks," or ceremonial visits to the high personages of the white race.

"And dangling loosely at his side,

His pouch of rabbit skin was seen."

The pouch held the tobacco for his pipe. It was generally made of the whole skin of some small animal—a rabbit, fox, or the largest species of squirrel.

“ His hatchet o’er his mat was slung,
Whilst his long knife before him hung.”

The hatchet or tomahawk, was carried slung at the back, with the handle up ready for the hand, and the scalping-knife, for the same reason, was placed in the wampum belt before.

STANZA XLV.

“ ‘ Hai ! hai ! ’ they sounded oft and loud.”

The cry “ Hai ! hai ! ” in the Iroquois language is the sign of peace. “ There was an Iroquese captain,” says Hennepin, “ who, one day wanting his bowl, entered into the town of Montreal, in Canada, crying ‘ Hai ! hai ! ’ which, in their language, is the sign of peace ; he was received with many caresses of kindness.”

“ Thus down St. Louis’ Street, that led
To the Place d’Armes, all slowly sped.”

The long street that led from the walls of Quebec to the square or Place d’Armes, was called in Frontenac’s time, as it still is, St. Louis-street.

STANZA XLVIII.

“ What doth my Canada father say ? ”

The Governor-General was styled by the Iroquois “ Canada father,” as well as Yon-non-de-yoh.

STANZA XLIX.

“ Why should the Ongue Honwee host.”

“ The Five Nations (or Iroquois) think themselves superior to the rest of mankind, and call themselves ‘ Ongue Honwee,’ that is, men surpassing all others.”—*Colden*.

“Why should our pathway with a cloud
The brave Ho-de-no-sonne shroud !”

The confederated nations, although called Iroquois by the French, never adopted the name. The name they bore among themselves was the Ho-de-no-sonne, meaning, “the United People,” or “the People of the Long House.” They took this name after they had formed themselves into the League, so often alluded to. The term Ongue Honwee was a phrase, not a name.

“From distant Missillimakinak.”

“The Coureurs de Bois have a small settlement at Missillimakinak.”—*La Hontan*.

“We’ll smoke the Calumet together.”

Smoking the Calumet together is, with the Indians, a sure sign of friendship.

“This belt preserves my words.”

“This colier (belt of wampum) confirms or contains my words.” This expression frequently occurs in the speeches of La Barré and Garangula, in their celebrated interview, as described by La Hontan. “Without the intervention of these coliers,” says La Hontan, “there is no business to be negotiated with the savages ; for, being altogether unacquainted with writing, they make use of them for contracts and obligations. In regard that every colier has its peculiar mark, they learn from the old persons the circumstances of the time and place in which they were delivered.”

“By deeds or singing-birds.”

Singing-birds mean, figuratively, tale bearers.

“Fusees, to bring the fleet moose low ;
Rackets, to hunt him in the snow.”

Fusees were most generally amongst the gifts to the Indians. The snow-shoes were called, as well as the ball-clubs, rackets by

the French, and were used by the savages to hunt the moose and deer in the deep drifts of the winter forests.

STANZA L.

“When, in his snowy-winged canoe,
First Walking Thunder crept to view.”

Walking Thunder was the name given to Champlain, by the Iroquois, on account of the fire-arms he carried when they first came in contact with him.

“The Adirondack dogs the knife
Against my people held in strife,
Red ever with their blood.”

Champlain, on his first arrival in Canada, found the Adirondacks and Iroquois at war; the former had driven the latter from their hunting-grounds, and were generally successful in their encounters with them.

“Beside that broad and lovely lake,
Where dwells the Prophet of the winds.”

“There is a rock in this lake (Corlear's Lake, or Lake Champlain, as it is now called), on which the waves dash and fly up to a great height when the wind blows hard. The Indians believe that an old Indian lives under this rock, who has the power of the winds; and, therefore, as they pass it in their voyages over, they always throw a pipe or some other small present to the old Indian, and pray a favorable wind.”—*Colden*.

“Herding with those base dogs, the fires
Of Walking Thunder fiercely flashed
Against the bosoms of our sires,
And to the earth their bravest dashed,
Sudden, as when the lightning's bound
Cleaves the proud hemlock to the ground.”

“Monsieur Champlain, the first Governor of Canada, joined the

Adirondacks in an expedition against the Five Nations. They met a party of two hundred men of the Five Nations in Corlear's Lake, which the French on this occasion called by Monsieur Champlain's name, and both sides went ashore to prepare for battle, which proved to the disadvantage of the Five Nations. The French began to join battle; and their fire-arms surprised the Five Nations so much that they were immediately put into confusion, for before that time they had never seen such weapons."—*Colden*.

“ Warriors who only bowed before
To Hah-wen-ne-yo.”

Hah-wen-ne-yo is the name of the Iroquois Creator, or Great Spirit.

STANZA LI.

“ But the wise Charistooni came,
And gave the dust where slept the flame
To our awed sires.”

“Charistooni, or the Iron Workers. This was the name the Iroquois gave the Dutch, according to the Rev. J. Megapolensis, the first clergyman in Rensselaerwyck.”—See *Moulton's History of New Netherland*.

It was from the Dutch that the Iroquois first received fire-arms, from which time they began their conquests.

STANZA LII.

“ Then the good Charistooni placed
The chain in Corlear's friendly hands.”

After the English conquered the Dutch in 1664, the latter transferred the good-will of the Iroquois to the former. On the 24th of September in that year, the first Convention was held between the English and the Iroquois, and a treaty of peace entered into at Albany.

"It was in honor of Corlear, a Dutchman, who was a great favorite with the Indians, that the Governors of New York were named Corlear by the Iroquois."—See *Smith's History of New York*.

This name was soon extended by them to the English generally.

Corlear was drowned whilst crossing the lake, now known as Lake Champlain. The Indians said, according to Colden, that he was drowned for not only disregarding to make the customary present to the old Indian of the rock (see note to Stanza I.), but absolutely mocking him." The lake is, however, to the present time called by his name by the Iroquois.

"Have dug the hatchet from the ground."

Digging the hatchet from the ground means, figuratively, according to Indian ideas, to declare war.

"And, turning, Thurenserah throws
His hatchet, with a look that glows
In glaring fury, at his foes."

"Their (the Iroquois) hatchet, in war time, is slung in their girdle behind them; and besides what use they make of this weapon in their hand, they have a dexterous way of throwing it, which I have seen them practise in their exercises, by throwing it into a tree. They have, in this way, the art of directing and regulating the motion, so that though the hatchet turns round as it flies, the edge always sticks in the tree, and near the place at which they aim it."—*Colden*.

CANTO THIRD.

STANZA III.

"And now round flame and war-post red."

A large fire is always kindled whenever the war-dance is to be danced, and beside it a post is planted painted red, and called the

war-post; and around these two objects the Iroquois warriors perform the ceremony.

STANZA V.

“A moose, slow grazing, went.”

The name moose is a corruption of the Indian appellation “musee or wood-eater.”

STANZA XX.

“Those maringouins! swarm on swarm
Thronged all the night about my form!”

Gnats found on the banks of the St. Lawrence in great numbers. La Hontan mentions them as objects of great annoyance, and so does Kalm. “The maringouins,” says La Hontan, which we call midges, are insufferably troublesome in all the countries of Canada. We were haunted with such clouds of them that we thought to be eat up.”

STANZA XXXI.

“‘The Griffin,’ says one, ‘was strong and fleet.’”

This was the name, according to Hennepin, of the first vessel of civilized man that navigated the great lakes. It was fitted out for a voyage of discovery under the command of the celebrated La Salle; Father Hennepin (who was one of the number that embarked with him) says, “The ship was called the Griffin, alluding to the Arms of Count Frontenac.”

CANTO FOURTH.

STANZA I.

“The sun-fired calumet he bore,
Sending its light smoke-offering o’er.”

In the Iroquois dances of thanksgiving to Hah-wen-ne-yo, it

was customary for the presiding priest to present him, according to La Hontan, with pipes of tobacco lighted at the sun.

STANZA II.

“Until the sunset’s dipping light,
When Thurenserah, at the head
Of all his Braves, would, in its sight,
The dance of Hah-wen-ne-yo tread.”

“When the sun is almost down, the warriors march out of the village to dance the dance of the Great Spirit.”—*La Hontan*.

STANZA XVI.

“Along the Castle’s gallery,
Over the verge of the rock outspread,
Whence the vision roamed far and free.”

“A fine gallery with a balcony runs the whole length of the Castle. It commands the road (harbor), and the lower city appears under your feet.”—*Charlevoix*.

“Whilst on the basin’s lake-like breast,
Was the long spread island in lustre dressed.”

“The wide part of the river immediately below Quebec is called the basin.”—*Weld’s Travels in Canada*.

“Between the city and the Isle of Orleans there is a basin a full league in extent every way, into which the river St. Charles discharges itself.”—*Charlevoix*.

STANZA XIX.

“Great as those casques the forms of stone
Displayed—forms terrible, unknown.”

There is a tradition amongst the Iroquois that their ancestors were invaded a long while ago by giants covered with garments made of stone. These invaders were called the Ot-ne-yar-he, or

the Stonish Giants. They were very fierce and terrible, and moreover cannibals, devouring men, women, and children, and depopulating in this way whole villages. Against their stone armor, the arrows of the Iroquois rattled harmlessly and in vain. At length Hah-wen-ne-yo took pity upon their distress, and, assuming the shape of one of these giants, pretended to lead them in search of the Iroquois, and at night induced them to lie down together in a hollow. Ascending then an eminence, he rolled great rocks upon them, and buried them underneath.

STANZA XXVI.

“From her dark hair a feather sprung,
Behind, the usual roller hung.”

The hair of the Iroquois women “is rolled up behind with a sort of ribbon,” says La Hontan, “and that roller hangs down to their girdle.”

STANZA XXVIII.

“But ere black Hah-no-gah-ate-geh.”

This is the Evil Spirit of the Iroquois. He is the brother of Hah-wen-ne-yo the Good Spirit.

“Ere Kah-qua brings another day.”

Kah-qua means the sun. The Iroquois personify almost every object in Nature of importance, such as the sun, moon and stars, mountains, &c.

STANZA XXXI.

“The battery’s frowning lines she saw.”

“By the side of the gallery of the Castle there is a battery of twenty-five pieces of cannon.—*Charlevoix*.”

STANZA XXXIII.

“ Instant a ball above him screeched.”

A cannon-ball in passing through the air gives a keen screeching sound.

CANTO FIFTH.

STANZA II.

“ The Bell-rock—

Sending o’er isle and wave its swell.”

Upon the Island of La Cloche in Lake Huron, there is a rock, which, when struck, yields a metallic sound like the toll of a bell.

The Indians look upon the spot as subject to supernatural influences, and have a great many superstitions and traditions connected with the rock.

STANZA VI.

“ Take the war-wampum ! my command

Bear, that the hatchet through the land

Unburied be against my foe !”

The wampum belt is a sign of war as well as of peace, and is sent by means of a runner amongst those who are to be notified of the expected hostilities, so as to rouse them against the common enemy. The sight of this mute messenger is well understood.

It is also sent to the tribes against whom the hostilities are to be directed, to inform them. The unburying the hatchet is, as before explained, a figurative expression denoting a declaration of war.

STANZA XII.

———“ in the trail

Between us sharp thick briers prevail.”

“ There are briers in the trail between us,” is the metaphorical

expression of the savages to signify that difficulty and trouble are between two tribes.

STANZA XV.

“ His arquebuse rusting for years in its nook.”

The arquebuse was a clumsy hand-gun, the pioneer of our musket, and was used in the wars of that period.

STANZA XVI.

“ The summer sun was sinking bright
Behind the woods of Isle Perrot ;
Back Lake St. Louis gleamed the light
In rich and mingled glow.”

Isle Perrot is situated in the upper or western part of Lake St. Louis, where the Ottawa river empties into the lake. The lake itself stretches its expanse to the westward of Lachine, which is situated upon a small bay of the former.

“ The slanting radiance at Lachine
Shone on an animated scene.”

Lachine was the place where Frontenac assembled his army, and whence he embarked on his expedition against the Iroquois.—See the Histories of the period.

STANZA XVIII.

“ Beneath were the griffins of Frontenac gleaming
In gold, on the breast of a pennon outstreaming.”

“ The arms of Count Frontenac have two Griffins for supporters.”—*Hennepin*.

STANZA XIX.

“ The sunset tints from the lake withdrew,
And now on the broad expanse were seen,

Here rough Ottawa's tawny hue,
There Cataraqui's splendid green."

This is a remarkable sight. The Ottawa dashes into the St. Lawrence with such force and volume that the discoloration of its waters is seen for a great distance, in contradistinction to the pure beautiful green of the river which receives it. It seems as if the latter shrank from the contact, to protect its purity as long as possible from the pollution of the stranger.

STANZA XXI.

"De Nonville sought
Our Seneca foemen!"

Several years previous to Frontenac's expedition De Nonville, the immediate predecessor of the former, made a descent upon the Iroquois, which proved disastrous to him.

CANTO SIXTH.

STANZA I.

"Along an Indian trail, that traced
Its deep seam through these forests vast."

The trails of the Iroquois, in the time of their power, wound in every direction of their Long House, and, trodden for centuries, were worn deeply in the earth. In some places they were worn three or four feet deep, and were quite narrow. Dr. Wilson, a Cayuga Chief, told me that he had seen parts of these trails sunk knee-deep in the ground, with large trees growing in them.

STANZA XV.

"At length a warrior rose, his breast
Bearing a snake tattooed, its crest
And forked tongue ready."

The Iroquois warriors were in the habit of tattooing upon their

skin their individual totem, which was generally the sign of some beast, bird or reptile. This was in addition to the totem of their clan or family.

STANZA XIX.

"In time of snows our old men tell
How by our sires the Kah-kwahs fell."

The Kah-kwahs were an Indian nation residing on the banks of Buffalo Creek, which was called by the Iroquois "Do-o-se-o-wah," or the "place of basswoods." They were defeated in a great battle near where their chief village was situated, by the Senecas, who took possession of the locality, reared their own village upon it, and made it the seat of their government or council fire. "It is a site," says Schoolcraft, "around which the Senecas have clung as if it marked an era in their national history."

"De-o-se-o-wah's huts within."

The Senecas called their village mentioned, De-o-se-o-wah.

STANZA XXI.

"Quick it spread,
'Till every quarter pealed it out."

The Iroquois villages were divided into quarters or districts.

STANZA XXII.

"Makes clustered apple-orchards bright."

Remains of the apple-orchards of the Cayugas are still seen in the neighborhood of the village of Aurora, which itself occupies the site of the chief village of the nation, which was called Ko-lah-ne-kah. The trees are mossy, and gnarled, and not inapt emblems of the race whose fathers planted and reared them.

STANZA XLVIII.

“Earth, we thank thee! thy great frame
Bears the stone from whence we came.”

The Oneidas deduce their origin from a stone. They call themselves Oneota-aug, people sprung from a stone.

“This stone,” says Schoolcraft in his Notes on the Iroquois, “is in Stockbridge, Madison County, New York. It lies on a very commanding eminence, from which the entire Oneida Creek valley, as far as the Oneida Lake, can be seen in a clear atmosphere. There, in seclusion from their enemies, the tribe expanded and grew in numbers. Time and usage rendered the object sacred, and as they expanded into nationality and power while located around it, their sages asserted with metaphorical truth that they sprung from this rock.

“It is a large but not an enormous boulder of syenite of the erratic block groupe, and consequently, geologically foreign to the location. There are no rocks of this species *in situ*, I believe, nearer to it than the Kayaderosseras, or the Adirondack mountains.”

STANZA LVIII.

“Men of blood!”

The Mohawks were an exceedingly fierce and warlike nation. They were a terror to their enemies for a great distance, and were known by the appellation of “men of blood.” This title was a source of great pride to them.

“Away! stern Bears!”

The word “Mohawk” is supposed to be derived from the Mohegan word “Muk-wa,” a bear.

The Mohawk Chiefs, in their speech at Albany, in 1690, sympathising with the whites on the burning of Schenectady, said, according to Colden, “We are all of the race of the bear; and a bear,

you know, never yields while one drop of blood is left. We must all be bears !”

CANTO SEVENTH.

STANZA I.

“ The beavers plunged within each mud-built hut,
As through their dam of trees a path was cut.”

“ As we came down the river (Wood Creek) the dykes, formed of branches and clay, which the beavers had made in it, produced new difficulties. We could not get forward with the boat till we had cut through them.”—*Kalms' Travels in North America.*

“ Ha ! look, proud Frontenac ! upon yon tree
The haughty savage still casts scorn at thee !
Drawn on its naked wood in tints of red,
Thou, with the warriors of thy host, art spread ;
Whilst at the roots the bundled rushes show
The stern defiance of thy tawny foe !”

“ The army moved slowly along the Oswego river. They found a tree as they passed along, on which the Indians had, in their manner, painted the French army, and had laid by it two bundles of cut rushes. This was a defiance in the Indian manner, and to tell them by the number of the rushes that fourteen hundred and thirty-four men would meet them.—*Colden.*

STANZA II.

“ Broader gleamings upon them break,
Through the thick forest—‘ the lake, the lake ! ’ ”

This was Onondaga Lake, through which Frontenac passed with his flotilla, and encamped upon its borders near where the Onondaga Creek joins the lake, and close to the celebrated salt licks.

“ Along the margin, a tract of white
Glitters like silver beneath the light ;
A shout went up—were the old dreams true ?
Was treasure there flashing its dazzling hue ?”

“ About this time (1669) a party of Spaniards, consisting of twenty-three persons, arrived at the village, having for guides some of the Iroquois, who had been taken captives by some of the southern tribes. They had been informed that there was a lake to the north whose bottom was covered with a substance shining and white, which they took from the Indian's description to be silver. Having arrived at Onondaga Lake and the French village, and finding no silver, they seemed bent on a quarrel with the French, whom they charged with having bribed the Indians, so that they would not tell them where the silver might be found.”—*De Witt Clinton's Memoir on the Antiquities of Western New York.*

STANZA III.

“ One blaze of silver Gar-noh-gwe-yoh glows.”

This is the Onondaga name for the Onondaga Lake, according to a Sachem of the same nation, known to the whites as Colonel Silversmith. His Indian name, however, is Ho-no-we-na-to, keeper of the records, which title he bears in accordance with the laws of the Iroquois, which makes the sachemships descend from father to son, like the titles of nobility amongst the whites. Ho-no-we-na-to is a respectable looking, grey-haired man, introduced to me by my friend Dr. Wilson. In the course of our interview he sang a war-song for me.

STANZA V.

“ The Mohawk, oldest brother, keeping
Watch the Long House's east porch o'er.”

The Mohawks were considered, according to Cusick and Schoolcraft, as the oldest brothers, and were appointed to keep a watch

towards the sunrise. They were called by the rest of the Confederacy, with reference to their locality, Do-de-o-gah," meaning "Message-bearers."

" The fierce, wild Seneca, unsleeping,
Making his breast the Western Door.

The Senecas, according to Dr. Wilson, are not the *Door-keepers* of the Long House, but the *Door itself*. They were called "Swanne-ho-ont," meaning "the door on the hinge." A single Seneca was called "*Ho-ne-ho-ont*."

STANZA VI.

" Of the eight Totems, one each breast
Displayed in blue tatoo impressed."

The Confederacy was subdivided into eight distinct clans or families, without reference to the five tribal distinctions. These subdivisions were distinguished by eight totems, viz. the Tortoise, Bear, Wolf, Crane, Snipe, Deer, Beaver, and Hawk, of which the first three, as before observed, (see Stanza ii., Canto ii.,) were the highest in rank. These totems were tattooed, in addition to their individual ones, upon the naked skin ; generally upon the breast.

" While frequently was seen the mark
Of the Ho-NONT-KOH next the other,
Which none decyphered but a brother ;
Order mysterious, secret, dark !"

The Ho-nont-koh, or secret order of the Iroquois. This was an order answering to our Masonic Institution. It was secret, the members bound by the closest ties. Its objects have never transpired. Their sign, according to Dr. Wilson, was a stripe tattooed upon the skin.

STANZA VIII.

" Was the League's coat of arms displayed."

The coat of arms described in this stanza was given me by my

friend, Ely S. Parker, a young Seneca of great intelligence and talent.

STANZA X.

“Upon his breast the totem of the BEAR.”

The Atotarho of the Confederacy belonged to the clan of the Bear.

STANZA XI.

“Till the first ring of braves was springing
Wildly around, all wildly singing.”

This was the “Was-sas-sa-o-nah,” or “Osage war-dance;” so called from its having been borrowed by the Iroquois from the Osage nation. It is more expressive than their own war dance.

STANZA XVI.

“And Braves whose deeds amidst their enemies
Were traced in crimson on the annal-trees.”

The Iroquois represent on trees peeled of their bark, in red colors, their expeditions, the deeds of their warriors, the scalps taken, &c. “These trees,” says Colden, “are the annals of the Five Nations. I have seen many of them, and by them and their war-songs they preserve the history of their achievements.

“Some

Striking the war-post.”

Striking the war-post means that those doing so are fitted to be warriors.

STANZA XX.

“How often has the Great White Bird
Seen us returning from our path
Loaded with scalps, and, joyful, heard
The songs that told our warrior wrath !”

This is the Bird of the Great Spirit, and is several times alluded

to in the poem. It takes note of the Iroquois warriors returning from the war-wath with scalps, and bears their names to Ha-wen-ne-yo, the name of the Great Spirit of the Iroquois.

STANZA XXIII.

“From Hah-rah’s drift-wood stream, to where
The Pequods on the salt waves sail.”

“Hah-rah,” is the Mohawk name for Schoharie Creek, meaning “drift-wood,” from the quantities of floating trees and branches that were in it.

The Mohawks extended their conquests to the sea-side in an easterly direction, overcoming the Pequods, who were the largest and most formidable of the tribes in that direction.

STANZA XXIV.

“Last, On-na-dah-gahs ! always true !
Proud people of the hills !”

The Onondagas were called among the Confederacy, “the people of the hills,” the word “On-on-dah-gah,” meaning literally in Iroquois, “on the hill.”

“Oft has De-kan-e-so-ra’s voice
Of music made your souls rejoice ;
If from Sken-ec-ta-da his speech.”

De-kan-e-so-ra was an Onondaga Sachem, living at the period of our tale, and was very celebrated as an orator. Colden frequently mentions him, and said that “he resembled much the bust of Cicero.” He generally represented the Onondagas at the conventions at Albany, between the Iroquois and the English, and was very frequently there. “Sken-ec-ta-da” was the Iroquois name for Albany.

“Heart of the League.”

The Onondaga Canton was the central one of the Confederacy.

STANZA XXXIV.

“ Like the blind rattlesnake, will ye
With your sharp fangs your own flesh tear !”

The rattlesnake, at a certain period of the year, becomes blind. It is then more ferocious than ever ; and, if attacked, in rage at not being able to see its enemy, it will strike its fangs into its own flesh.

STANZA XXXV.

“ The combat also had renewed
Suspicion of the Ho-nont-koh sway.”

The order of the Ho-nont-koh was always regarded with suspicion by those of the Iroquois who were not members of it. To this day some of them assert it was instituted for wicked purposes.

STANZA XXXVII.

“ From yon tall pine the feeblest eye
Can view the waters of the Lake
Where the three Wise ones formed the Tie.”

Onondaga Lake, from which the chief village of the Onondagas was situated only some five or six miles, was the spot where the League was formed under the direction and superintendence of Hah-yoh-wont-hah, Atotarho, and To-gan-a-we-tah.

“ Whose records ye at feasts have heard
Ho-no-we-na-to oft repeat.”

The only records of events which the Iroquois, as a people, possess, are the records of that, by far the most important epoch of their history, the formation of their Confederacy. A Sachem of the Onondagas was appointed to keep them, called Ho-no-we-na-to (meaning literally “ Keeper of the Records,”) and at Feasts, and other important assemblages either of the Nation or whole League,

he was accustomed to repeat them for the information of his hearers, and to instil in them love and veneration for the Confederacy itself and the objects of it.

“ And from stern Yon-non-de-yoh fly
As if he was the O-yal-kher black
Coming on his devouring track.
No ! when he comes, ye’ll be, oh Braves !
Like that bold creature from the waves,
That rose and made the enemy,
Fierce as he was, back, bleeding, flee.”

“ Rumors began to be rife of the appearance of an extraordinary and ferocious animal in various places, under the name of the great O-yal-kher, or Mammoth Bear. One morning while a party of hunters were in their camp, near the banks of a lake in the Oneida country, they were alarmed by a great tumult breaking out from the lake. Going to see the cause of this extraordinary noise, they saw the monster on the bank rolling down stones and logs into the water, and exhibiting the utmost signs of rage. Another great animal, of the cat kind, with great paws, came out of the water and seized the bear. A dreadful fight ensued ; and in the end, the bear was worsted, and retired, horribly lamed.”—*Schoolcraft's Notes on the Iroquois*.

STANZA XXIX.

“ Braves ! hear again the words of dread,
By bright To-gan-a-we-tah said,
A hundred hundred moons ago !”

To-gan-a-we-tah was regarded by the Iroquois as a preternatural being ; he is described as a young man of a remarkably beautiful person, so beautiful that Hah-wen-ne-yo himself might envy him,—very good and very wise. He was, as before stated, one of the three makers of the League, and appeared suddenly amidst the

people, just before the agitation of the subject, no one knowing whence he came. After the formation of the Confederacy, he uttered the following extraordinary prophecy. Said he,—“When the White Throats shall come, then, if ye are divided, you will pull down the Long House, cut down the Tree of Peace, and put out the Council Fire.”

These words (given to me by Dr. Wilson, an Iroquois Chief, as before stated, as the literal prophecy) made a deep and lasting impression upon the minds of all who heard them. To-gan-a-we-tah, as soon as he had uttered the prophecy, disappeared as suddenly as he appeared, and was seen no more, but his prophecy was remembered.

The Iroquois had never heard of the existence of the Whites, and could not therefore understand what the term “White Throats” meant. They kept looking out, however, from that time, during generations, for the appearance of the objects described in the saying, and when the white men came, they discovered at last the meaning of the words. How the prophecy has been fulfilled, is now a matter of history.

STANZA XLV.

“ ’Twould come like that swift bird of snow,
By the Great Spirit sent to say,
To Hah-yah-wont-hah, ‘Come away!’ ”

(See note to Stanza xlv., Canto ii.) This bird was supposed by the Iroquois to have been sent by Hah-wen-ne-yo to tell Hah-yoh-wont-hah that his mission being accomplished, he must return to the happy hunting-grounds.

“ And waiting thy lov’d presence there
The unfailing strawberry will prepare.”

The Iroquois believe that when they reach the happy hunting

grounds, the Great Spirit will provide for them the most delicious fruits known to their woods, chief of which will be the strawberry. One large berry of the latter will be placed before each, divided into four parts which, as fast as they are consumed, will be successively renewed, thus making one unfailing and eternal strawberry for the recipient's use.

“ thy feet by day
Be like the tireless moose's way ;”

La Hontan relates that the Indians told him “ the moose could trot three days and nights without intermission.”

STANZA XLVII.

“ One pearly cloud was melting there
Like Hah-yoh-wont-hah's white canoe,
When up, up through the summer air,
He vanished from the people's view
Amidst the sky's triumphal strain,
Its welcome to his home again.”

The traditions of the Iroquois concerning the three framers of the League are exceedingly interesting and romantic. After the accomplishment of the Confederacy To-gan-a-we-tah, as before remarked, on the delivery of his extraordinary prophecy, suddenly disappeared, and was supposed to have returned to the heavens, whilst Hah-yoh-wont-hah was seen by the assembled multitude to ascend amidst bursts of the sweetest melody, in a snow-white canoe which had suddenly shot down from the sky, rising higher and higher, until he melted away in the upper distance. Atotarho alone remained to place himself at the head of the Confederacy, and leave his name and authority to a long line of successors.

CANTO EIGHTH.

STANZA III.

“Upon their creaking wheels the cannon rolled,
Jolting o'er roots, or sinking in the mould;
In a carved chair behind, amidst a throng
Of nobles Frontenac was borne along.”

“The Count de Frontenac was carried in a chair directly after the artillery.”—*Colden*.

“Still on they struggled, ranks and files were lost,
And as chance willed it, strode the motley host.”

“It was impossible to keep order in passing through thick woods, and in passing brooks.”—*Colden*.

STANZA IV.

“That startled deer! how fiercely doth he beat
With his black hoofs the earth—hark, hark, how shrill
His whistle!

The American deer, when suddenly startled, stamps with his fore-feet violently, and gives birth to a shrill, whistling noise.

STANZA XII.

“Slow sauntering onward went a musketeer,
His huge piece slung within his bandoleer;”

The bandoleer was a strap attached to the person, and used to support the weight of the ponderous musket of those days. This name was also given to a strap slung around the shoulder containing charges of ammunition.

CANTO NINTH.

STANZA XVIII.

“ And in the bright hunting grounds waiting him, he
Was scenting the feast of the strawberry.”

When an Iroquois is dying with a calm and tranquil countenance, those around him say, “ he is scenting the strawberry of the Great Spirit !”

N. B.—On page 89, 13th line from top, read “ dew-spangled” for “ dew-bespan-
gled.”



CANTO NINTH.

STANZA XVIII.

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When an Iroquois is dying with a calm and tranquil countenance, those around him say, “ he is scenting the strawberry of the Great Spirit !”

ERRATA.

- Line 4 from top, for “ shown” read “ shone,” page 30.
- Line 3 from bottom, for “ who’s” read “ whose,” page 52.
- Line 4 from top, for “ mess” read “ mass,” page 115.
- Line 4 from bottom, for “ to” read “ too,” page 118.
- Line 8 from bottom, for “ it” read “ its,” page 127.
- Line 4 from bottom, for “ sappling” read “ sapling,” page 155.
- Line 12 from top, for “ chip” read “ chirp,” page 157.
- Line 12 from bottom, for “ dropped” read “ drooped,” page 198.
- Line 10 from top, for “ motely,” read “ motley,” page 229.
- Line 8 from top, for “ seeming” read “ seaming,” page 244.

N. B.—On page 89, 13th line from top, read “ dew-spangled” for “ dew-bespan-
gled.”





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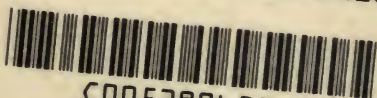
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